History of the Great Fire in Boston

Col. R. H. Conwell

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BOSTON. B.B.RUSSELL & CO

HISTORY

OF THE

GREAT FIRE IN BOSTON

NOVEMBER 9 AND 10, 1872.

BY

COL. RUSSELL H. CONWELL.

Sicut patribus, sit Deus nobis.

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TO

THE CITY OF CHICAGO,

WHO,

NOTWITHSTANDING HER RECENT SUFFERING AND LOSSES, WAS THE

FIRST TO OFFER ASSISTANCE

IN THE HOUR OF BOSTON'S GREATEST TRIAL,

This Volume

IS DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

SCHOLARS often regret, that, in their careful research, so few descriptive accounts can be found of the great conflagrations which destroyed the ancient cities of Europe and Asia; and writers frequently suffer much inconvenience because the extensive fires of modern times have not been more fully and concisely described by the pen of the historian.

It is to supply such future demands, as well as to place before the present generation a readable and trustworthy account of the great fire in Boston, that the author undertakes this delicate and arduous work.

College Hill, Somerville, Mass.,
Nov. 16, 1872.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

THE thanks of the author are due to many gentlemen for kindly assistance, and to ladies in securing information for this volume. The haste with which such a work must be prepared in order to meet the public demand has made the cheerful aid which his friends have so freely extended of great value to him. He would therefore express his gratitude in this manner to the following gentlemen: Hon. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff, Hon. William Gaston, Gen. James A. Cunningham, Hon. William Gray, Mrs. William Claflin, Col. Charles H. Taylor, Mr. Edward P. Bond of the New-England Shoe and Leather Association, Hon. A. H. Rice, Col. E. H. Savage, Mr. E. M. Bacon, Mr. John S. Damrell, Mr. B. F. Priest of "The Daily Transcript," Mr. W. D. Hayden, Mr. L. G. Farmer, Hon. J. M. S. Williams, Mrs. William H. Hartshorn, and Miss Emma S. Dow.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE.

I. — GROUP, steel engraving; viz., Portraits of Mayor Gaston, and Chiefs Damrell and Savage . . . . . (*Frontispiece.*)

II. — BOSTON IN FLAMES on the night of the conflagration (*colored*) . 57

III. — BEEBE'S BLOCK before the fire, and BEEBE'S BLOCK in ruins . . 61

IV. — MAP OF BOSTON, showing the burnt districts 77

V. — BOSTON IN RUINS 91

VI. — FRANKLIN STREET before the fire, and FRANKLIN STREET in ruins, 225

VII. — NIGHT-SCENE, — Franklin Street 251

VIII. — NIGHT-SCENE, — Summer Street 255

IX. — VIEW OF THE RUINS from Summer Street 261

X. — VIEW OF RAND, AVERY, AND CO.'S PRINTING-ESTABLISHMENT, Cornhill 271

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF BOSTON.

PAGE.

The First Settler. — The Massachusetts Colony at Charlestown. — The Wonderful Spring. — Gov. Winthrop. — First Streets. — Growth of the Colony. — Widow Anne Tuthill's Windmill. — Curious Laws. — First Church. — North Church. — Old South Church. — King's Chapel. — Trinity Church. — St. Stephen's Church. — Home of Benjamin Franklin. — Fort Hill. — Names of Streets. — The Mineral Spring. — Quaker Meeting-House. — Historic Localities. 15–27

CHAPTER II.

GREAT FIRES IN BOSTON.

Address of Hon. Robert C. Winthrop. — Great Fire on Hanover Street. — First Fire-Company. — Conflagration in Dock Square. — First Fire-Department. — Blowing up Houses. — Destruction of Cornhill by Fire. — Second Fire on Cornhill. — First Contributions in Aid of Sufferers by Fire. — Church-street District. — Other Fires. 28–45

CHAPTER III.

BEFORE THE FIRE.

Saturday Evening. — An Hour before the Fire. — Boston Happy. — Presentiments. — The Horse-Disease. — Ominous Indications of the Coming Calamity. — Editorial Dinner. — Shop-Girls. — Millionnaires. — Thoughtlessness in Time of Alarm. — Box 52. — The Weather. — State House. . 46–52

CHAPTER IV.

BEGINNING OF THE GREAT FIRE.

PAGE.

Leman Klous's Building. — Origin of the Fire. — Its Discovery. — Appearance. — The Alarm. — Arrival of the Engines. — Description of the Wild Fire. — The Excitement. — Beebe's Block. — The Raging Demons of Fire. — Otis Street. — Summer Street. — Bedford Street. — Against the Wind. — Destruction of Dry-Goods. — Trinity Church. 53–65

CHAPTER V.

SPREADING NORTHWARD.

Hawley Street. — Franklin Street. — Business-Houses destroyed. — Arch Street. — Devonshire Street. — Franklin Street. — Progress of the Flames. — The Flagstaff. — Federal Street. — Congress Street. — The Ruined Ones. — The Whirlwind. — The Boot and Shoe Marts. — Pearl Street. — Oliver Street. — Milk Street. 66–73

CHAPTER VI.

QUELLING THE FIRE.

New Post-Office. — The Beginning of the End. — Battling the Flames. — Congress Street. — Liberty Square. — Lindall Street. — Broad Street. — The Old Post-Office. — Removal of the Mails. — The Horrid Din. — Sublime Scenes. — Boston by Firelight. — Boston by Gaslight. 74–78

CHAPTER VII.

THE PEOPLE.

Citizens of Boston. — Their Faith. — Confidence in the Fire-Department. — Waiting too Long. — Excited Crowds. — Saving of Merchandise. — Fear and Dismay. — Call for Powder. — The Awful Uproar. — Moving Household Furniture. — Scenes Distant from the Fire. — The Firemen. — Crowded Streets. — The Morning. — Sight-Seers. — The Soldiery. — Comparison with a Bombarded City. 79–89

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RUINS.

Appearance of the Burnt District. — Blockaded Streets. — Bewildered Explorers. — Safes and Vaults. — Visitors. — Sentinels. — Cragged Walls. — The Ruins by Moonlight. — Gradual Expiration of the Fires. — Clearing the Streets. — Photographers. — New Post-Office Building. — Militia Lines. — Strangers in Boston. — First Week after the Fire. 90–99

CHAPTER IX.

THE HEROIC DEAD.

PAGE.

True Heroes. — Death by Fire. — Frank D. Olmstead. — His Self-Sacrifice. — Albert C. Abbott. — Lewis Porter Abbott. — Capt. Daniel Cochrane. — Walter S. Twombly. — Capt. William Farry. — William S. Frazer. — Others injured and killed. 100–105

CHAPTER X.

GOD'S HELP.

Turning to the Almighty. — Sermons on the Fire. — Rev. Dr. Manning. — Rev. W. H. H. Murray. — Rev. W. R. Alger. — Rev. Dr. Webb. — Rev. John F. Beckley. — Rev. Dr. Bartol. — Rev. Phillips Brooks. — Rev. J. R. Cushing. — Rev. A. J. Gordon. — Rev. W. H. Baldwin. — Rev. J. F. W. Ware. — Rev. George L. Chaney. — Rev. W. F. Mallalieu. — Rev. S. K. Lothrop, D.D. — Rev. Robert Collyer. — Rev. James B. Dunn. — Rev. Dr. Lorimer. — Rev. J. J. Lewis. — Rev. B. M. Simons. — Rev. Rollin H. Neale. — Rev. Dr. Talmage. — Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. 106–151

CHAPTER XI.

MAN'S HELP.

Chicago the First to offer Assistance. — Wirt Dexter's Speech. — Boston's Sympathy for Chicago. — Resolutions. — Despatch from D. L. Moody. — The Masons of Chicago. — Arrival of Chicago Relief Committee. — Speech of Rev. Robert Laird Collier. — Report of the Chicago Relief Committee. — New-York Chamber of Commerce. — Speech of Hon. William A. Dodge. — Brooklyn, N.Y. — St. Louis. — Other Cities. — Old Boston in England. 152–170

CHAPTER XII.

HELPING OURSELVES.

The Section of the City destroyed. — Homeless Ones. — Relief Committee. — Names. — Resolutions. — Navy-Yard Employment. — Report of a Committee Meeting. — Hesitation about receiving Aid from Abroad. — Miss Jennie Collins and the Sewing-Girls. — Kinds of Employment. — How the Work was done. — Rather work than beg. — Generous Giving. — Protest against the Issue of more Currency. — Temporary Provision for All. . . 171–192

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FIRE-DEPARTMENT.

PAGE.

Past Services of the Fire-Department. — Lack of Water. — No Horses. — First Hose-Carriage at the Fire. — First Steamer. — Different Alarms. — Chief Engineer Damrell. — Companies from out of Town. — Unadjustable Hose. — Heroic Conduct. — Sad Fate. — Protest of the Board of Engineers. — Blowing up Buildings. — Mr. Damrell objects to the Use of Powder. — Is persuaded to use it. — Effectiveness of the Explosion — Major-Gen. Benham. — Gifts for the Relief of Firemen. — The Board of Engineers. . . 193–207

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MILITIA.

Promptness of the Soldiers. — Excellent Performance of Duty. — Gen. Cunningham's Order. — Names of the Military Organizations. — Conflict of Orders. — Ludicrous Exhibition of Military Rule. — Clearing City Hall. — Troops in the Old South Church. — Field and Staff. — Farewell Order of Gen. I. S. Burrill. 208–215

CHAPTER XV.

THE POLICE.

Making Arrests. — Capturing Stolen Property. — Mistaken Vigilance. — The Jails filled. — Class of People arrested. — The Small Number proved to be Dishonest. — The State Police. — Dark Night. — Drunkenness. — Closing of Liquor-Saloons. — New-York Roughs. — Their Interception. — Police Relief Fund. 216–221

CHAPTER XVI.

THE TRADES.

Boot and Shoe Trade. — Early Manufactories. — Shoe and Leather Trade Fifty Years Ago. — Wilde's Hotel. — The First Traders. — The Hon. Amasa Walker. — Moving into Pearl Street. — South Street. — Pearl Street before the Shoe-Dealers. — Amount of Trade. — The American House. — Statement of Losses. — Occupation of Fort Hill. — The Wool-Trade. — Amounts imported. — Amount destroyed. — The Paper-Trade. — Large Houses destroyed. — Effect on the Market. — The Dry-Goods Trade. — Enormous Stock destroyed. — The Clothing-Business. — The Hardware-Trade. — Number of Firms burned out. 222–235

CHAPTER XVII.

INSURANCE AND THE LEGISLATURE.

PAGE.

Character of Insurance. — Amount of Losses. — Companies paying in Full. — Formation of New Companies. — Resolution of the Relief Committee. — Necessity for a City Loan. — Meeting of the Governor's Council. — Speech of the Hon. William Gray and Others. — Application by the Insurance-Companies. — Proclamation by the Governor. — Convening of the Legislature. 236–245

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES.

"The Boston Daily Evening Transcript." — Historical Notice. — Description of the Building. — "The Boston Post." — Narrow Escape from Destruction. — "The American Homes." — Suffering the Second Time. — "The Pilot." — Mr. Donahoe's loss. — "Waverley Magazine." — "Boston Journal of Commerce." — "The Saturday-evening Gazette." — List of Periodicals burned out. — State Printers. 246–253

CHAPTER XIX.

FACTS AND FIGURES.

Report of United-States Signal-Officer. — The Police from Other Cities. — The Heaviest Losers. — Resolutions by the Lumber-Dealers. — The Removal of Bullion from the Sub-Treasury. — The Work of opening Safes. — Destruction of the Vault belonging to the Freeman's National Bank. — Five-cent Savings Bank. — Emigrant Savings Bank. — The Loss to Harvard College. — Remarkable Incidents. — The Insurance-Companies. — The Methodist Seminary. — Straightening Streets. — Mansard Roofs. — Boston, Hartford, and Erie Railroad Station. — Breaking-out of the Second Fire. — Rand, Avery, and Co. — The Third Fire. — The Old South Church. — The Chicago Fire. 254–281

CHAPTER XX.

SCENES AND INCIDENTS.

The Little Leader of the Blind. — An Heroic Boy. — Boston by Candlelight. — Payment of Gas-Bills. — Curiosity. — Gratitude. — The Stampede of Irish Tenants. — Harriet Beecher Stowe. — Generous Action of Boston Merchants. — Relic-Hunters. — Return of Stolen Property. — Incidents connected with Safes. — The Burning of "The Pilot" Office. — Appearance of the

PAGE.

Business-Men. — Solvent Insurance-Companies. — Extortionate Draymen. — South Boston under Fire. — Burning to Death. — Ludicrous Signs. — "Her Clara." — "Cannot beat Chicago." — Passing the Guards. . . . 282–306

CHAPTER XXI.

THE EFFECT.

The Influence of our Loss upon Other Cities. — Cannot suffer Alone. — Effect upon Working-Men and Working-Women. — Ruined Walls, but Unbroken Courage. — The Better Boston. 307–312

HISTORY OF THE GREAT FIRE.

CHAPTER I.

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH OF BOSTON.

BOSTON, in 1629, had one inhabitant. He, however, called it "Shawmut," as did the Indians who occasionally hunted partridges through its underbrush and glades, and built their camp-fires beside the ledges of its three hills (tri-mountain). Rev. William Blaxton was the first settler, and, as near as we can ascertain by the records, the only one who made any permanent stay on the peninsula previous to the advent of the Massachusetts colonists. He was a strange man, with considerable skill as an agriculturist, and entertaining a queer notion, that any neighbor nearer than Charlestown would be crowding him. For seven years he held the whole peninsula, and cultivated a portion of it near the bay; and appears to have had a grant of the entire tract from the King of England, although we can judge of

that only by the fact that subsequent settlers purchased the land of him without questioning his title.

In the spring of 1630, a large company of emigrants belonging to the Massachusetts colony, which was an incorporated body under the laws of England, landed in Salem under the guidance of Gov. Winthrop. In July they settled in Charlestown, then called "Mishawum." But there was no pure water to be found in the vicinity of Mishawum except one spring, which was below tide-water. So many were sick, that sufficient help could not be found to care for them; and in that condition some died unattended. A gloomy state of affairs indeed, and such a one as would move the sympathies of anybody. Mr. Blaxton heard of their sufferings, and very generously sacrificed his desire to be alone in order to comfort them; and invited them over to Shawmut, where were beautiful springs, and one especially that was a marvel of crystal beauty. This celebrated spring, which was the real cause of the removal of the colony from Charlestown to Boston, flowed on for a hundred years after, giving health and strength to all who came for its unceasing waters. On the 17th of September, 1630, after "resolving" in the court of governor and council (Sept. 7) to call the settlement "Boston," the colony was ferried across, and pitched its tents and erected its rude barracks about the coveted spring.

Mr. Blaxton was annoyed by the contiguity of other families, and moved away into a place now known as

Blackstone in Rhode Island. Before going, however, he sold all his land to the colony. The houses of the governor, John Winthrop, the deputy-governor, Thomas Dudley, and the secretary, Simon Brodestreet, were built near the spring, being one-story structures with thatched roofs.

They were a wise company, and genuine heroes: but they were not far-sighted enough to provide for the great city which was to follow; and they constructed their roads with a view only to the cost, and avoided with short turns all the knolls, bowlders, and hollows. What was five minutes of walking then, compared with the immense labor of making straight highways?

The first street was doubtless located where Washington and Union Streets now are; and, as more than fifteen hundred persons came into the colony during the first year, that highway and Tri-mount (Tremont) Street, laid out soon after, must have been populous avenues very early in the history of the colony. The town grew surprisingly fast in view of its rough surface, shallow soil, and the strict laws, one of which was a public whipping for being caught kissing a woman.

There were added to its numbers, by immigration, about fifteen hundred persons each year during the earliest period of its life. The land was divided into pastures and gardens by rough fences, with lanes leading to them from the principal highways. The water from the principal spring, as it ran down toward the harbor,

kept moist a very troublesome marsh (where Milk Street is now laid), which was the boundary of several pastures.

The hill afterwards known as "Fort Hill" was steep and jagged on the north and east side, with an easy slope on the south and west. It was a famous place for Indian corn; and its crops were the pride of the whole people. James Penn was the owner for many years, and kept his corn-fields in a good state of cultivation, notwithstanding the fact that the town took a small space on the top in 1632 for a fort, and kept it ever after ready for an attack. In 1643, Widow Anne Tuthill, the enterprising wife of an energetic miller, moved her windmill from Newton, "where there was no wind," to some point on Fort Hill; and entered into competition with like establishments at Copp's Hill, now known as the "North End."

The cows were brought from England, and a variety of fruit-trees and vegetables, which, with some at Plymouth, were the nucleus of the widespread orchards of America. There were occasional dangers from the failure to procure food; and many moved to Newton to escape the threatened famines. But a trade was started with the Indians of Cape Cod through the assistance of the Plymouth colony; and thus the calamity was averted.

How they built their houses on the lanes, how they were governed, how they married or conducted their

funerals, how they grew in numbers and importance, and the long series of causes which led to the war of the Revolution, can best be read in volumes devoted exclusively to those topics. It is the writer's more especial work to make reference to such historic localities as were included in or connected with the "burned district."

The first church-edifice erected in Boston was located on the road now called State Street, on the south side, near the building so long known as "Brazer's Block." It was a one-story, thatched-roof structure, with rude benches, and a more rude pulpit, made rough from necessity, and "to contrast with the extravagant Saint Bartolph's Cathedral in old Boston, England," from which the builders came. This awkward church was built in August, 1632; the regular services having been held in private houses or under the trees before that time, with the Rev. John Wilson acting as pastor. In 1640, when the first building was destroyed, the congregation relaxed a little in their belief in the efficacy of rough boards as a purifier of the soul, and built a much better house on the present site of Joy's Building, on Washington Street. This was burned in 1711, and replaced by a brick church structure, which was taken down in 1808.

Sept. 30, 1648, the Second Church was organized, and a house of worship constructed at the North End, on North Square. It was torn to pieces by the

soldiers in 1775, and the members united with Dr. Lathrop's church in Hanover Street.

In July, 1669, seceders from the First Church erected the Old South on its present site, which was formerly a portion of Gov. Winthrop's estate. In 1729 it was taken down, and the present brick edifice reared on the same foundation. Since that time, it has been most intimately connected with American history; and there has clustered about it a store of reminiscences dear to every true American heart. There powerful sermons against oppression were delivered; there Warren nerved the hearts of his hearers for a first rebellion; there the patriots held public and secret meetings; there, it is said, the plot for the destruction of the tea was formed; and from its doors sallied the disguised freemen who destroyed that cargo. The first election-sermon was preached there in 1712; and that precedent was followed for a hundred and sixty years. Earthquakes, fires, storms, lightning, and human marauders, spared it; and even the British soldiery, who made bunks of the seats, bar-rooms of the galleries, and dance-halls of the aisles, did not deface its exterior: yet trade, that leveller of "sacred hills," is less considerate; and the venerable pile must fall.

In 1689, King's Chapel, at the corner of School and Tremont Streets, was built, and rebuilt in 1713. It was again rebuilt in 1754.

In July, 1715, a company met at the Bull Tavern, in

Summer Street, and organized a church, to be called the "New South." In September of that same year, they applied for leave to erect a church on the spot now known as the "End Lot," at the junction of Summer and Bedford Streets. The house was originally built of wood, but was rebuilt with Chelmsford granite in 1814, and "stood the test of time" until four years ago, when it was removed to give place to those elegant palaces of trade, built in 1868, of which we all were proud.

Trinity Church, in Summer Street, situated on the north side, near Washington Street, was erected of wood in 1734, and was the third Episcopal church built in the city. Christ's Church had become so crowded, that another church was necessary; and, accordingly, the Summer-street lot, then in the most aristocratic portion of Boston, was selected as its site. In 1828 it was taken down, and built of Quincy granite, in the massive Gothic style, — so like the eloquence and thought of him who last occupied its pulpit. It had seats for twelve hundred persons. The interior wood-work was painted in imitation of oak, and the ceilings were artistically frescoed. Burial tablets, of costly design, also adorned the walls; and underneath the church was a burial-place containing fifty-five tombs, one of which was used for the interment of strangers.

There have been eleven rectors of the church, whose settlements may be enumerated as follows: Rev. Addington Davenport, settled 1740; died 1746. Rev. Wil-

liam Hooper, 1747; died 1767. Rev. William Walter, D.D., 1767; left 1775. Rev. Samuel Parker, D.D., 1775; died 1804. Rev. John S. C. Gardiner, assistant 1792; rector 1805; died 1830. Rev. George W. Doane, D.D., assistant 1828; rector 1830; left 1833. Rev. John H. Hopkins, D.D., assistant 1831; left 1832. Rev. Jonathan M. Wainwright, D.D., 1833; left 1837. Rev. John L. Watson, assistant 1836; left 1846. Rt. Rev. Manton Eastburn, D.D., bishop of the diocese 1842; died 1872. Rev. John Cotton Smith, assistant. Rev. Phillips Brooks, present rector, settled 1869. The corner-stone of the first edifice was laid by the Rev. Mr. Price, of King's Chapel; who also preached the first sermon in the church, Aug. 15, 1735.

In the year 1836 a free Episcopal church was established in Common Street, and soon became so crowded, that in 1845 a larger and more substantial house was erected in Purchase Street for the congregation. Hon. William Appleton gave twenty-seven thousand dollars, and Edward Tuckerman bequeathed five thousand dollars, toward the same object; and thus was established a beautiful, substantial church, and thus did great men send the gospel to the poor. The Rev. E. M. P. Wells was the last rector who officiated regularly within its walls.

On Sunday, Jan. 17, 1706, Benjamin Franklin was born in a two-story, thatched-roof building, covered on the front with rough clapboards, and on the sides with

rude shingles, and which occupied a piece of ground about twenty by thirty feet. This queer dwelling, having but one room on the ground-floor, was situated on Milk Street, near the corner of Washington Street, and opposite the Old South Church. Benjamin's father soon after moved to the Blue Ball, at the North End; but the old house, having undergone various changes, stood until 1810, when it was destroyed by fire. Afterwards a large granite building was built on the same ground; and the wealthiest merchants of the country bought and sold merchandise on the much-honored spot.

After a portion of Fort Hill was purchased of Mr. Penn for a fort, it became a kind of public resort for evening and holiday promenaders; and after some years the corn-fields gave place to the dwellings of the wealthier people of Boston who could "afford to live so far in the country." While the vicinity of Federal, Pearl, and Devonshire Streets, was still a cow-pasture, elegant houses were occupied on the slopes of Fort Hill; and Summer Street was its natural avenue of approach. By an ancient map of the town, made in 1728, we find that the land was still much used for farming-purposes between Milk Street and Essex Street, and doubtless continued so for a great many years. At the date mentioned, the principal streets were laid out as they now run. The names of some of them sound a little ludicrous in the ears of the modern Bostonian. High Street was called "Cow Lane;" Batterymarch Street,

"Crab Lane;" Exchange Street went by the title of "Pudding Alley," and sometimes "Pudding Lane;" and the streets connecting State Street (then called King Street) with Dock Square were named "Crooked Lane," "Shrimpton Lane," "Perkins Alley," and "Merchants' Row." Portland Street was called "Cold Lane;" Boylston Street was known by the nomen, "Frog Lane;" while fourteen of the streets now in use were called lanes.

It was as late as 1800 when Fort Hill began to be very extensively occupied by private dwellings. Who were the pioneers in the movement is not positively known. It is certain, however, that the Hon. Andrew Oliver, stamp-officer, whose house was attacked by the Stamp-Act rioters of 1765, and who was compelled to come in the rain to the Liberty-Tree, at the corner of Essex and Washington (now) Streets, and publicly resign his office, lived on one side of that hill; and he was one of the most wealthy citizens.

In 1830 it was a "very princely quarter," according to a weekly paper of that period; and the transformation of the decayed old fort into a public park (Washington Square), and the establishment of public buildings there, doubtless much increased its popularity.

Within a score of years, the place changed much; and all the princely families moved away to Beacon Street, the Back Bay, or the South End, leaving their mansions to be occupied, room by room, by the poorest of Bos-

ton's population. In 1865 the city voted to cut away the hill, and proposed to use it for filling up the Church-street district, Atlantic Avenue, and other places; and in 1869 appropriated a million two hundred and fifty thousand dollars for that purpose. It was at once cut down to the grade of the surrounding streets; and its removal left a large unoccupied space to be filled with business-houses.

Summer Street continued to be a dwelling-place for wealthy "old residents" until as late as 1858. Daniel Webster, for many years, had his home on the corner of High and Summer Streets; and the dwelling only five years ago gave up its claims to a granite building of very extensive proportions. In a house two doors west of Otis Street resided the great orator, Edward Everett, during the last years of his life; and it is only very recently that the dwelling was superseded by stores.

In Hawley Street, in the year 1808, a mineral spring owned by Mr. Hall obtained great celebrity on account of its medicinal qualities, but suddenly became unpopular, and was abandoned. Arch Street and Winthrop Square were long noted for their fine gardens; and the business-blocks there, as on Franklin Street, were all nearly new at the time of the great fire. Previous to the grand business-palaces of Franklin Street, there was a double row of brick dwelling-houses, called Franklin Place, and, previous to the dwelling-houses, a boggy

marsh running down through Mr. Charles Bulfinch's garden.

The Quaker meeting-house erected on Congress Street (then called Leverett's Lane), at the head of Lindall Street, in 1709, near which was the "old Quaker burying-ground," and to which the society removed from Brattle Square, was standing in 1828, when the yearly meeting of Friends conveyed it by deed to Dr. Edward H. Robbins. It was afterwards occupied by "The Boston Daily Evening Transcript;" and in 1860, on the removal of that popular paper to Washington Street, Messrs. J. E. Farwell & Co. leased the chambers for their large printing-establishment. The burying-ground, which of course has been wholly removed, was the fourth in point of antiquity in the town, — the King's-Chapel graveyard in Tremont Street being the first, Copp's-Hill burying-place the second, the Granary burial-yard, near Park-street Church, the third.

Of these historic localities, the recent great fire swept over the birthplace of Franklin, about the Old South Church, Gov. Winthrop's homestead, and the Quaker meeting-house. It piled ruins around Fort Hill, and over the foundations of Webster's and Everett's homes. It demolished Trinity and St. Stephen's churches. It levelled the stores on the site of the New South Church, and it boiled about the mineral springs; and the crystal fountain which called the Massachusetts colony from Charlestown was only protected by the new United-

States treasury-building. So great had been the growth of the city, that a half-century had seen that whole region covered with substantial brick and granite. One day served to destroy it.

CHAPTER II.

GREAT FIRES IN BOSTON.

A CHAPTER upon the great fires which find a place in the historical records of Boston cannot be better introduced than by giving an extract from an address given by the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop at an evening gathering of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Nov. 14, 1872, held in honor of Mr. Froude, the distinguished English historian: —

"*Gentlemen of the Massachusetts Historical Society*,—

"I must beg your attention for a few moments. I have promised our distinguished guest, that, after the fatigue of the interesting lecture which he has just delivered at the Tremont Temple, he shall not be involved in any ceremonious utterances again to-night. But as we desire that our meeting shall be a matter of record, and that his name may be entered among those present, if not as taking part in its proceedings, I am sure he will pardon me, and you will all pardon me, for an informal word or two before we relapse into a mere social party.

"Let me say at the outset, that the arrangements for this occasion were made before the occurrence of the awful calamity which we all so deeply deplore, and from which so many of us are more or less sufferers in common with our fellow-citizens. And our guest was himself the first to suggest, that, in presence of such an event, all engagements of this sort might well be cancelled: but on consultation with our worthy host, Mr. Lowell, I found that he saw no reason why a stated meeting of our old Historical Society should not proceed according to the programme, under his hospitable roof; more especially as, at this moment, we have no sufficient roof of our own for the purpose. Our meeting will at least furnish evidence, that, while we heartily unite with all around us in lamenting the terrible disaster which has befallen our beloved city, we all have the fullest faith and confidence, that, at no very distant day, it will be ours to witness and to record the reconstruction of all which has been destroyed, the recovery of all which has been lost, the building-up again of all these waste places and of the fortunes of those who have occupied them, and the complete restoration of Boston to its long-accustomed prosperity.

"We may well draw consolation and confidence from the records of the past; and I venture so far to presume upon your indulgence, and upon the official relation which I bear to the society, as to turn back the pages of history for a few moments, and to remind you how

often our fathers suffered in the same way before us, and how bravely and triumphantly they met such calamities.

"I doubt not that there are many of those present who remember having read a discourse delivered by Cotton Mather at what was called 'the Boston Lecture,' on the seventh day of February, 1698, and which is included in the first volume of his 'Magnalia.' After alluding to the wonderful growth of our town, until it had become known as 'the metropolis of the whole English America,' he proceeds to say, 'Little was this expected by them that first settled the town, when for a while Boston was proverbially called "Lost-Town" for the mean and sad circumstances of it;' and then, after depicting the dangers of famine and the ravages of the small-pox, from which it had repeatedly and severely suffered, he goes on as follows: —

"'Never was any town under the cope of heaven more liable to be laid in ashes, either through the carelessness or the wickedness of them that sleep in it. That such a combustible heap of contiguous houses yet stands, it may be called a standing miracle. It is not because the watchman keeps the city (perhaps there may be too much cause of reflection in that thing, and of inspection too): no, it is from thy watchful protection, O thou Keeper of Boston! who neither slumbers nor sleeps. . . . TEN TIMES,' he continues, 'has the fire made notable ruins among us, and our good servant

been almost our master; *but the ruins have mostly and quickly been rebuilt.* I suppose that many more than a thousand houses are now to be seen on this little piece of ground, all filled with the undeserved favors of God.'

"This was in the year 1698, when Boston had but seven thousand inhabitants, and when one thousand houses were as many as Cotton Mather dared positively to count on our whole peninsula. Ten times, it seems, the town had already been devastated by fires. You may find an account of almost all of them in Mr. Drake's elaborate History of Boston.

"One of them, in 1654, was long known as 'the great fire;' but neither its locality nor extent can now be identified. Another of them occurred in November, 1676, which was called 'the greatest fire that had ever happened in Boston.' It alarmed the whole country as well as the town, and burned to the ground forty-six dwelling-houses, besides other buildings, together, it is said, 'with a meeting-house of considerable bigness.' Two or three years only afterwards (in 1679) another still more terrible fire occurred, when, we are told, all the warehouses and a great number of dwelling-houses, with the vessels then in the dock, were consumed, — the most woful desolation that Boston had ever seen. 'Ah, Boston!' exclaimed Mather in view of this catastrophe, 'thou hast seen the vanity of all worldly possessions. One fatal morn-

ing, which laid *fourscore* of thy dwelling-houses and *seventy* of thy warehouses in a ruinous heap, gave thee to read it in fiery characters.'

"So fierce were the ravages of this last fire, we are told, that all landmarks were obliterated in several places; and considerable trouble was experienced in fixing the bounds of estates. But we are also told, 'Rebuilding the burnt district went on with such rapidity, that lumber could not be had fast enough for the purpose;' and, as Dr. Mather said eighteen years afterwards, the ruins were mostly and quickly rebuilt.

"In 1702 we read of another fire, which was for many years talked of as 'the seventh great fire.' It broke out near the dock, destroying a great amount of property; and 'three warehouses were blown up to hinder its spreading.' It thus seems that our fathers understood this mode of arresting the flames a hundred and seventy years ago, — perhaps better than we seem to have done in these latter days. But they must have been sadly deficient in other appliances; as, only two days before this fire broke out, a vote had been passed in town-meeting, 'that the selectmen should procure two water-engines suitable for the extinguishing of fires, either by sending for them to England, or otherwise to provide them.'

"In October, 1711, again a still more destructive conflagration took place in Boston. The town-house, the old meeting-house, and about a hundred other houses

and buildings, were destroyed, and a hundred and ten families turned out of doors. 'But that,' it is recorded, 'which very much added unto the horror of the dismal night was the tragical death of many poor men, who were killed by the blowing-up of houses, or by venturing too far into the fire.' The bones of seven or eight of these were supposed to be found. 'From School Street to Dock Square, including both sides of Cornhill, all the buildings were swept away.'

"Once more, and finally, we turn over to 1760, when the remembrance of all other Boston fires was almost obliterated by that of the 20th of March of that year, which, it was said, 'will be a day memorable for the most terrible fire that has happened in this town, or perhaps in any other part of North America, far exceeding that of the 2d of October, 1711, till now termed "the great fire."' *Three hundred and forty-nine* dwelling-houses, stores, and shops were consumed; and above one thousand people were left without a habitation.

"And thus has history repeated itself in the experiences of Boston; and thus we find that our early predecessors in these pleasant places were called to endure calamities by fire almost as great, perhaps quite as great, in proportion to the population and wealth, and means of relief, of their days, as those which have now fallen upon us. We see, too, with what constancy and courage they bore them, and how uniformly the record runs that 'the ruins were quickly rebuilt.'

"I will not come down to later years; though, even within the memory of some now living and present, disastrous and wide-spread conflagrations have occurred, which seemed at first to overshadow the prospect of our prosperity and growth. But we see what Boston has become in spite of all these discouragements and drawbacks, and how the enterprise and bravery of her people, ever mounting with the occasion, have carried us onward and upward to the position and elevation which we have recently enjoyed; let me say, which we still enjoy. The same enterprise, the same courage, are still ours. With trust in each other, trust in ourselves, and trust in God, we shall go through our furnace of affliction as our fathers went through theirs, — not unscorched, certainly, but tried, purified, invigorated; and Boston will resume a leading place in the business of the country and of the world, and rise to greater eminence than it has ever yet attained.

"Yes, my friends, I am persuaded that those who succeed us in this Historical Society, — I will not say a century hence, nor even half a century, nor a quarter of a century, but at a much earlier period, — when they recall the incidents of this overwhelming conflagration, and describe the devouring element leaping from roof to roof with such terrible energy, and involving so much of the solidest part of our city in seemingly helpless, hopeless desolation, will say also, not only that there was no hanging of the head or folding of the arms in

despair, but that, even while the embers were still casting their glaring light upon the sky, while the wearied firemen were still pouring rivers of water upon the smouldering, treacherous ruins, and before the danger of further destruction was altogether at an end, — even then the elastic and irrepressible spirit of our people asserted itself as it had never done before; that even then our noble merchants, with old, familiar names at their head, were engaging their architects and making their estimates for reconstruction; while the municipal authorities were running out the lines of new streets and new squares, and projecting the plans of a grander and safer business city than had ever before been witnessed here. And they will add to the record, that these plans were rapidly executed, and the reconstruction completely accomplished.

"True, we have lost much, and our hearts are in the deepest sympathy with the sufferers. Indeed, we are all sufferers together. There is no exemption from the results of this catastrophe; and I would not underestimate its severity. But how much we have left! — almost all the dwellings of the poor as well as of the rich; Faneuil Hall and the State House and the City Hall; the Old State House and the Old South; all our court-houses and record-offices, — not one touched; our public library, all our schoolhouses, and almost all our churches. Still more, the enterprise and liberality of our capitalists, the genius of our engineers and in-

ventors, the public spirit of our citizens, the sympathy of our fellow-men everywhere, — all are left to us; and, above all else, that abiding faith and trust in a wise and merciful Providence which we inherited from our fathers (and from our mothers also), and which is emblazoned on the very seal of our city, — '*Sicut Patribus, sit Deus nobis.*' While we are true to that motto, and to the spirit of that motto, Boston will never be called 'Lost-Town,' either proverbially or otherwise, however it may have been so called in the days which Cotton Mather described."

It appears, that notwithstanding there were many accidental fires during the first twenty years of the town's existence, yet there was no general conflagration until 1653, when occurred the first "great fire." As Mr. Winthrop suggests, no particulars were ever recorded in any public way by which its location or extent could since be determined. It was for many years spoken of in sermons and letters as "the great fire."

Nov. 27, 1676, a fire was accidentally set by a careless and sleepy apprentice, who dropped a lighted candle, or left it too near some combustible substance. This was the largest fire "ever known" in Boston, and swept the whole district between Richmond, Clark, and Hanover Streets, to the bay. The territory seems small to us of this day; but that region then was a very important part of Boston. The Rev. Increase Mather's

church and dwelling were destroyed, together with a portion of his valuable library. Mr. Hubbard, author of "The History of New England," thus mentions that conflagration: —

"After all the forementioned calamities and troubles, it pleased God to alarm the town of Boston, and in them the whole country, by a sad fire, accidentally kindled by the carelessness of an apprentice that sat up too late over night, as was conceived; which began an hour before day, continuing three or four, in which time it burned down to the ground forty-six dwelling-houses, besides other buildings, together with a meeting-house of considerable bigness. Some mercy was observed mixed with judgment; for, if a great rain had not continued all the time (the roofs and walls of their ordinary buildings consisting of such combustible matter), that whole end of the town had at that time been consumed. It began, about five in the morning, at one Wakefield's house, by the Red Lion (tavern).

"The wind was south-east when it began, and blew hard: soon after it veered south, and brought so much rain as much prevented further mischief. Charlestown was endangered by the flakes of fire which were carried over the river."

Up to this time, no provisions had been made by the town to extinguish fires. It is to be supposed that some efforts were at once made to secure an engine, as one appeared at the next fire. The names of the per-

sons enrolled in the first fire-company that was organized in Boston were as follows; viz., John Barnard, Thomas Elbridge, Arthur Smith, John Mills, Caleb Rollins, John Wakefield, Obadiah Gill, Samuel Greenwood, John Rainsforth, Edward Martin, Thomas Barnard, and George Robinson. The foreman was a carpenter, by the name of Thomas Atkins. This company appeared in the next great fire, which occurred Aug. 7, 1678. It broke out at midnight, and burned until noon. It began near the dock (now Dock Square), and burned along the wharves, taking vessels, storehouses, and dwellings, and making "most woful desolation." Eighty dwellings and seventy warehouses were destroyed; and the loss was computed to be nearly two hundred thousand pounds. Cotton Mather, in one of his writings, exclaims, "Ah, Boston! thou hast seen the vanity of all worldly possessions." So great was the demand for lumber with which to rebuild, that the supply was for a while completely exhausted. It appears to have been hastily yet substantially rebuilt; for one of the buildings constructed at that time is now standing on the corner of North Street and Dock Square. This fire so awakened the authorities to the necessity of making better provisions against fire, that a company of men, whose names are recorded, were authorized to blow up houses; while swabs, buckets, scoops, and axes were placed in each ward, and a sentinel kept in the church-towers on the

sabbath day. Drake's "History of Boston" refers to it, and says, "At a town-meeting ten days after the fire of the 8th of August, Capt. James Oliver was chosen commissioner, and Mr. Nathaniel Barnes clerk of the writs. A committee was appointed to join with the selectmen to consider what might be done for the safety of the town, and preventing fire. This committee consisted of John Richards, Dr. Elisha Cooke, Capt. John Walley, Capt. Daniel Henchman, Mr. James Whetcombe, and Mr. John Usher. Soon after, it was ordered that the eight foot companies should constitute the watch of the town, each in their own quarters or wards. The number of men to be detailed from each company for the service was thus stated: From Major Thomas Clarke's, six; from Major Thomas Savage's, six; Capt. James Oliver's, five; Capt. William Hudson's, six, and two at the powder-store; Capt. Daniel Henchman's, five; Capt. John Richards's, six; Capt. John Hull's, five, and one at the powder-store; and of Capt. Humphrey Davis's, five. It was at the same time ordered that the town should be divided into four quarters, each to consist of two wards; that in each quarter four barrels of powder should be lodged; six hand-engines and two crooks in each ward. The care of the north quarter, containing Major Clarke's and Capt. Richards's companies, was committed to Major Clarke, Capt. Richards, Capt. Elisha Hutchinson, and Capt. Henchman; the con-

duit quarter, containing Major Savage's and Capt. Henchman's companies, to Mr. William Taylor, Lieut. Daniel Turill, Mr. Christopher Clarke, and Lieut. Anthony Checkley; the centre quarter, containing Capt. Oliver's and Capt. Davis's companies, to Major Thomas Savage, Mr. Anthony Stoddard, Capt. Thomas Brattle, and Mr. Elisha Cooke; the south quarter, containing Capt. Hudson's and Capt. Hull's companies, to Mr. John Joyliffe, Capt. John Hull, Capt. John Faireweather, and Capt. John Walley."

In case of fire, these persons, or any two of them, were empowered to blow up or pull down houses. "Mr. Isacke Addington and Mr. John Joyliffe p[r]ose and put the foregoing in a right methode fit for press, together with all former orders relateing to fire." It was further ordered, that, in every quarter of the town, there should be provided at the town's charge twenty buckets, twenty swabs, two scoops, and six axes; that sixteen men, two out of every company, "doe ward in y[e] Towne every Sabbath day, one of w[ch] is to be on y[e] Top of each meeting-house to look abroad for preuenting spreading of fire y[t] may break out."

How long these strict regulations were observed does not appear: but it is certain, that, for a long time, there was no fire worthy of mention; and it is but reasonable to suppose that these precautions prevented any general conflagration.

There were fires in September and December of 1680,

in October, 1690, and in August, 1691; but the next "great fire" happened in March, 1702. Breaking out again "near the dock," it gained such headway, that three warehouses were blown up to prevent its spreading. Then the town voted to send to England for two water-engines.

In October, 1711, a disastrous conflagration visited the business-streets of the town, which was thereafter, with reason, denominated "*the* great fire." It started in a back-yard, in a pile of oakum which a woman was picking by candle-light. Contemporary accounts speak of it as follows: —

"It reduced Cornhill into miserable ruins, and it made its impression into King Street and Queen Street; and a great part of Pudding Lane was also lost before the violence of it could be conquered. Among these ruins there were two spacious edifices, which, until now, made a most considerable figure, because of the public relation to our greatest solemnities in which they had stood from the days of our fathers. The one was the town-house, the other the old meeting-house. The number of houses — and some of them very capacious buildings — which went into the fire with these is computed near about a hundred.

"But that which very much added to the horror of the dismal night was the tragical death of many poor men who were killed by the blowing-up of houses, or by venturing too far into the fire. Of these the bones of

seven or eight were supposed to be found." At this time, a contribution in aid of the sufferers is first mentioned; seven hundred pounds having been given by the churches. The legislature soon after provided for ten firemen in each ward, who should have a badge of office; "namely, a staff five feet in length, colored red, with a bright brass spire six inches long." These men were authorized to pull down or blow up houses, or do any thing deemed necessary to quell a fire; and could command assistance. The first engine-house appears to have been built "near the town-house," in 1711.

The first fire-society in the city was organized in September, 1717.

In 1733 there must have been a large fire-department, as there were seven water-engines stationed in the town.

Dec. 9, 1747, a fire in the town-house destroyed many valuable records, the loss of which is felt to this day.

A fire in Oliver's Dock, Nov. 14, 1759, did considerable harm, leaving fifteen families homeless. Even the governor worked with the firemen in extinguishing the flames; and we infer that it caused considerable excitement.

In March, 1760, came the next "great fire;" and it eclipsed all the others. It began, from some unknown cause, in Cornhill, at "the sign of the Brazen Head." It raged down to Dock Square, sweeping a wide tract down on the north side of King (State) Street to the

wharves, and there destroying much merchandise and some shipping. Three hundred and forty-nine dwellings, stores, and shops were utterly consumed; and one thousand well-to-do people were left homeless. That part of Boston then was filled with very respectable dwellings. The loss exceeded a hundred thousand pounds. It must have been a terrible scene when the flames flew so fast from house to house, that notice could not be given the sick or sleeping before the fire was at their doors. The legislature voted three thousand pounds for the relief of sufferers. The Pennsylvania and New-York legislatures also voted liberal sums. Gov. Lawrence of Nova Scotia sent four hundred and eighty dollars, while merchants of New York and London sent large amounts. The great preacher Whitefield sent two hundred and fifty pounds from England. Then the legislature passed an act providing for the exclusive erection of brick and stone buildings.

In January, 1761, Faneuil Hall, and a row of shops near by, were destroyed.

June 10, 1762, another fire occurred in Cornhill, doing considerable damage; but it is recorded that the firemen "worked nobly," and prevented very great destruction.

Feb. 10, 1767, there were twenty houses consumed in Centre Street (then Ball's Alley), near the old Mill Creek.

In 1787 (April 20) a fire in Beach Street destroyed a hundred buildings; and of this number were the

Hollis-street Church and sixty dwellings. It called out generous donations; and at this time Lafayette made his generous gift.

July 7, 1824, occurred the "great fire" which levelled fifteen houses on Beacon, Charles, and Chestnut Streets, and was only overcome after one of the hardest fights recorded in which the firemen of Boston took part.

April 7, 1825, the great square between Doane, Kilby, Batterymarch, and Broad Streets, was consumed, together with an enormous amount of property.

In May, 1835, the Blackstone-street fire occurred, which took away upwards of forty buildings, and left a number of families homeless. In all of these fires the fire-department was very efficient; and in some few cases silver medals were conferred for individual bravery.

Fires have since occurred as follows: Church-street district, May 11, 1845, when hundreds of families were rendered homeless. Mathews Block, on Eastern Avenue, including the whole square bounded by North and Clark Streets and the harbor, was burned Feb. 24, 1862: thousands are said to have been rendered homeless. The great fire in East Boston, July 4, 1861, destroyed a hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of property. There were two other fires of great magnitude, — one at Battery Wharf, April 27, 1855, loss two hundred and ninety-eight thousand dollars; and one on Haverhill, Traverse, and Beverly Streets, Jan. 21, 1847, loss seventy-five thousand dollars; the late terrific conflagration

in East Boston being the last of any importance previous to the time of which we are about to speak.

Such is the record of the fire-fiend in Boston, told as briefly as possible, — far too briefly to remind the reader of the thousands who suffered; of the tears, the groans, the deaths, the narrow escapes, noble daring, the romantic results, the poor-house, or chain, as they came crowding upon the searcher into the history of fires. But Boston has not suffered alone; and yet a great and good name has she for her willingness at all times to care for the suffering ones who lived in distant cities cursed by fire. New York, Washington, Chicago, Springfield, Portland, Pittsburg, and many other sister-cities, have been liberally aided in times of such disaster by Boston.

Pleasant, indeed, is it for cities, as well as men, "to dwell together in unity."

CHAPTER III.

BEFORE THE FIRE.

SATURDAY evening, Nov. 9, 1872, has passed into the history of Boston, and will long darken its pages, even as Sept. 2, 1666, startles the reader of the annals of London, and as Oct. 7, 1871, chills the chronicler of Chicago's trials. The contrast between the calm and almost solemn peace which characterized the hour of sunset on the evening of the fire in Boston, and the tumult and din which followed close upon the alarm, was as great as could be imagined. Boston was ever quiet on Saturday evenings; for though the *animus* of the old Puritanic rules was gone, yet the conservative, steady people had not outgrown the habit of "keeping Saturday night." The stores closed earlier, the dinner-tables were spread sooner, than on other days; and that evening in the streets impressed the stranger with the thought that it was still observed as a part of the sacred sabbath.

An hour before the fire, the writer traversed several

of the principal thoroughfares, and felt that loneliness which pervades the silent, half-abandoned streets of a great city. At the railway stations, and on the corners of those streets by which the several lines of horse-cars passed, there were collected little groups of men and women, waiting for the conveyances which should take them to their homes in the suburbs; but the great arteries of the city's business-life were unusually deserted, and the sound of a passing vehicle started strange echoes among the columns and doorways of the silent piles of masonry. But no street nor byway of all the thoroughfares of Boston was more deserted and lonely than was Summer Street, — that great depository of wealth, on the corner of which the fire was first discovered; only one or two lighted doorways from Washington Street to Broad Street; while, with but rarely an exception, the windows were dark, with curtains and shutters carefully and securely closed. Occasionally there were footsteps to be heard, as some late clerk hastened down the sidewalk toward the Boston, Hartford, and Erie Railway station; and at the corner of Summer and Arch Streets, as late as seven o'clock, there could have been seen a little company of men discussing the presidential election with grotesque gesticulations.

Boston was happy. There were instances where men closed their shutters that night with the thought that perhaps they should never open them; and one case is related of a proprietor residing at the South

End, who was so strongly impressed "that something was going to happen," that he returned to his closed store after having gone a part of his way home, and took from the safe bonds, notes, and several valuable books, which would otherwise have been totally destroyed. But the great masses that go to make up that staid old city were as happy and confident as men well could be. It is true that "most sacrilegious murder" had astounded the people of Cambridge but a few days before, and was still the principal theme of discussion in the Boston press. It is also to be remembered that the horse-disease, which had for several weeks deprived the people of conveyance, and business of its usual life, had discouraged and alarmed some, and furnished food for fun with many others. For many days before the fire, the horse-cars had ceased to run; and it was only on the previous day that the corporations felt safe to run them with any degree of regularity. Hand-carts, drays, express-wagons, and even hacks, had been drawn by men; and, in some cases, squads of employés, dragging heavily-loaded wagons through the streets, were preceded by brass bands playing "Oh, dear! what can the matter be?" For a while, the heavy drayage was done exclusively with oxen.

London had its plague as a forerunner of its greatest conflagration; and so had Boston. London's visitation sent disease among the people: Boston's malady fell upon the horses. Londoners fled in dismay from shop,

quay, and home; while Bostonians remained, worked and joked, and made the best of it.

One correspondent went so far as to say that the coming calamity might have been predicted by the ominous signs which preceded it, and suggested the ludicrous theory, that while no phantom ships or armies were seen in the heavens, and no ghosts squeaked and gibbered in the open streets, yet "the fatal accidents in Lowell, Hartford, and Providence, the death of Americans by the cholera, the spread of the small-pox, and the *general gloom*," should have foretold disaster. The same writer quoted the sadness which he said prevailed at the annual post-election dinner of the Boston press, held that evening at the Revere House, as a proof of his superstitious ideas. The fact was, that the frequent references made to beloved members of the editorial fraternity who had died within the year naturally threw a shade of sadness over the whole assembly; but that occasion was, on the whole, a very pleasant and interesting one.

There was a suicide in Appleton Street, a robbery in Commercial Street, and affrays in Elm and North Streets; there was news of the lost by the burning steamer in West-India waters; there were falls in stocks; there were unabated taxes; it was a hard time to obtain money; and there were trial, trouble, sickness, and death, as there had been almost every day for a century, and as there will be, perhaps, for a million cen-

turies more. If there were deaths, there were also recoveries and births. If there were new sorrows and new disasters, so there were new joys and much unexpected prosperity.

Boston *was* happy; and, in all her throngs of cheerful faces, none were more gleeful than they who had just closed their shutters, covered their counters, in buildings so soon to crumble and fall. Even the working-girls from the fifth stories of gigantic warehouses skipped along towards their homes that evening as gayly and gladly as though there was much of joy in hard work, and the world was not so bad a world after all.

> "Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate,
> All but the page prescribed, — the present state."

Faces smiled as sweetly, and diamonds flashed as beautifully, in the parlors and halls of the millionnaire's mansions, the music was as stirring, and the voices chimed as melodiously in the suburban homes, that evening, as they ever had done before.

Even after the repeated alarms and the glowing of the cloudless sky, which naturally told of the dreadful destruction, merchants gathered their dressing-gowns closer, merely placed their slippered feet nearer the registers, and carelessly remarked, "There's a fire somewhere." *Of course*, it could not be in or near their buildings! The same stolid faith for which Boston was ridiculed in 1762 had lost but little of its strength that

night; and, while that religious faith which had ever characterized her people appeared to lose none of its tenacity, their confidence in themselves, their trade, their buildings, and their institutions, increased with every prosperous year. So when the bells clangored of fire at "No. 52," and they heard the rumble of the fire-engine as it hastened by their doors, they thought that but *one* building *could* burn. In some instances, men slept sweetly all night whose wealth was being destroyed in Franklin Street, although the lurid glare of the volcano played about their pillows, and made ghastly shadows on the window laces and shutters: and, if they waked at all, it was to murmur, "The fire is at Box 52; and that is a long way from my store."

The weather was clear and calm, and all nature was taking a season of unusual repose. The moon, which came up so bright and beautiful, saw but few clouds; and its light rested upon the bay, the islands, the hills, and the city, as softly and serenely as when Grecian poets first sang in its praise.

The State House, which crowned the city, rested as silently and grandly on Beacon Hill as ever, with the eyes of political mariners still turned toward it from every stormy, diplomatic ocean, as men looked toward that spot in the ancient years, when beacon-fires lighted the sailors through the dangerous straits into the peaceful harbor.

Peaceful Boston, the birthplace of intellectual and physical freedom in its best form, can it be that you must pass through fire? Strange, indeed, are the ways of the Almighty!

CHAPTER IV.

BEGINNING OF THE GREAT FIRE.

ON the south-easterly side of Summer and Kingston Streets, but a short distance from the bay, stood a large, four-story granite building, owned by Leman Klous, and occupied in the basement and the first story by Messrs. Tebbitts, Baldwin, and Davis, wholesale dealers in dry-goods; while Damon, Temple, and Co., wholesale venders of hosiery, gloves, laces, and small wares, used the second and third floors; and Alexander K. Young and Co., manufacturers of ladies' hoop-skirts, held the upper flat. It was one of the most solid and well-built structures in Boston, and was constructed but a few years before the fire, in accordance with a neat and carefully-prepared design. It was crowded with the merchandise which had been brought in for the winter's stock, but contained nothing more combustible than the hundreds of dry-goods boxes and counters which occupied the lower stories. For the convenience of the whole building, an elevator had been constructed inside the walls,

which was drawn up from basement to attic by means of machinery, for which a small steam-engine in the basement furnished the power.

It was from the fire under that steam-boiler, and by means of that elevator, that the great conflagration began. It is not known just how the fire caught; for the fireman raked the coals, and took all the usual precautions with careful hand. Some spark snapping outward, or some stray coal undiscovered, which escaped from the furnace during the process of raking, or overheated surfaces which came in contact with combustible material, may have caused the fearful destruction; but we can only conjecture. No human eye was there to note the little spark, the diminutive flame, and the tiny stream of smoke, that could so easily have been smothered with the foot, or extinguished with a cup of water.

It is easy to surmise that the flame started from the floor, and slowly burned its way into the sheathing and casings of the room, and thence naturally into the aperture, from floor to floor, through which the elevator passed up and down, and which acted as a flue for the fire, and with a strong draft drew the flames upward, fanning them into wilder life. The blaze may have streamed through the doorways by which the elevator communicated with each story, and almost simultaneously dashed into every apartment: but this is one of God's secrets; and the tale, as far as human evidence is concerned, begins when the building was on fire from basement to attic, and from end to end.

The Old-South clock had just struck seven, when a pedestrian hurrying up Summer Street noticed something strange about the structure, and paused a moment to satisfy his curiosity. The gigantic fortress was silent and immovable, and the outlines of its ornamented roof and cornice cut sharp corners against the sky; while a dull, moaning sound, as of distant waters, was all that he heard. Were the owners inside? Oh, no! They had closed their shutters, balanced their accounts, covered their counters, locked their safes, and, with thoughts intent on the evening's joys or the morrow's rest, hurried away in fancied security. They dreamed, as millions have dreamed before, that they of all others were the most safe. The week of prosperous manufacture and trade illumined their waking dreams, until the delusive light appeared to shine far into the future, showing to them, as to others, commercial hills of beauty, and valleys of social peace.

The weary footsteps of clerk and agent had long since died away as they sought the thresholds of up-town homes; and yet an unearthly, half-stifled groan came from the building, as though an army sighed within. Then suddenly a stream of flame, red as living blood, — like a hideous spectre-gleam from the regions of hell, — flickered and flashed in the darkened room of an upper story, and confronted the moonlight on the window-panes with its hideous shadows of smoke and flame. The gigantic warehouse was on fire; and Summer Street,

with all its wealth of merchandise, was in danger. Yet the confident owners knew it not; and the silks rustled as richly about the sweet faces in luxuriant halls as though no volcanic Titan was heaving, puffing, and tugging to get at their piles of merchandise and well-filled vaults. Will they smile to-morrow when he is king?

Sooner than it can be told, and before the alarm could be given, the fiery monster within, as though the building were a frail prison-house, lifts the floors, and shakes the windows; and, before his presence is known even to the solitary pedestrians whose footsteps echo in the deserted arches, he roars with the voice of continuous thunder, and, bursting the window-panes, thrusts out his lurid fingers to clasp the cornice and casings which adorn the street-front. Then, impatient of restraint, and laughing at granite, he lifts himself, and spreads his arms of fire. The walls divide, the roof falls; and the demon most dreaded of earth is free to crush and devour, till the city weeps in dust and ashes, and the wealthy are made poor.

Where is the voice or the pen which can portray that horrid feast of fire?

> "Oh for a Homer's pictured words
> To paint the fearful fray!"

To one who has not seen Vesuvius in furious eruption, or heard the thunders of Stromboli, no comparison can

BOSTON IN FLAMES.

be made which would be sufficiently expressive; and only they who saw the seething, shooting, overleaping columns of flame, and heard the hissing, snapping, and bellowing of that all-consuming fire, can form any accurate idea of it.

Quickly did the beholder rush to the signal-box upon the corner; and instantly thereafter the electric nerves of the city carried the news to the City Hall and to the bells, saying, in five slow strokes and two quick beats of tongue and gong, that there was fire near Box 52. Hundreds of thousands heard the notes of alarm, but went on their way as unheeding and careless as though the fire were back in the heavens from whence Demetrius stole it.

In an incredulously small space of time the steam fire-engines came rattling into Summer Street, and, one after the other, hastily took their stations at convenient points about the burning pile. Soon the water surged and hissed against the melting walls, and clouds of steam almost obscured the fire. But when the roof began to fall, and the walls to topple, the flames ascended far into the heavens, carrying up thousands of fire-brands, to drop them upon the tar-covered roofs of adjoining blocks.

Then came the war-dance of the fire-fiends, with all its hideous concomitants, — its snapping, rattling, bellowing, crashing; its streams of hellish flame, and puffs of swarthy smoke, as though the earth had yawned, and

loosed those weird, traditional denizens of its fiery depths. They peered into the glittering windows, and the panes ran off in crystal pearl-drops; they crept through the empty sashes into the ware-rooms, and danced about the ceiling, — now peering into the closets and darkened stairways; now wildly glaring into boxes of dry-goods, or slyly peeping under loaded counters, searing all with their breath of fire. Pallid faces filled the streets below; fire-engines roared and screamed; and firemen clambered upon window-sills, cornice, and embattlement: but the insatiate flames hissed their defiance, and with lurid hands thrust back the water in spiral clouds of steam. "No quarter!" screeched the flashing crusaders against wood and stone; and before them merchandise turned to ashes, and escaped by the windows in the gusts of miniature whirlwinds. Iron melted; granite crumbled; brick and mortar fell away; and stout timbers glowed a moment, and then tumbled and crashed into the ash-heaps which seethed at the bottom of the fiery abyss.

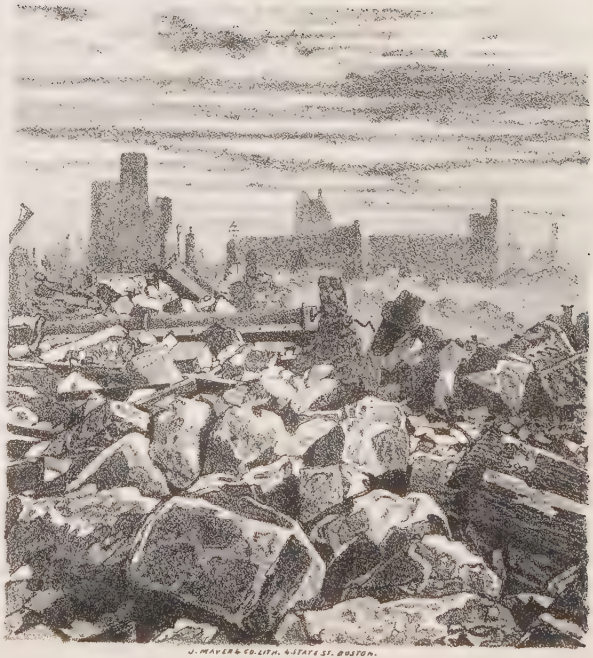
It burned as fires have burned before, and may burn again; except that never before in its history had it such solid fortresses to capture, and so much stone and iron to destroy. Wood is the fiend's proper food; and men are not surprised when he seizes and consumes that material: but well might they look aghast, and begin to forget the "Bostonians' stolid faith," when slate, granite, marble, brick, iron, and steel seemed to

flash up as tinder, and glow like furnace-coal. It seemed a fruitless, foolish task to attempt the quelling of such ferocious flames, when they leaped across Summer Street to Otis Street, bursting in the windows, scaling off the stone, and sending their little shoots of fire into every crevice, nook, and corner, and with white-heat driving the firemen from the street, and charring long lines of hose. Nevertheless, what man could do the firemen of Boston did. They erected barricades, and, crouching behind them, held the nozzles of the hose in position until the fire came down into the streets and seized upon their shelter. They risked their lives on precarious projections, and hung to the roof and window-sashes, using one hand for self-preservation, and with the other giving direction to the streams of water. It is true, that in the confusion, and the sometimes insane riot, which for a time were caused by the wild attempts to save the burning or exposed merchandise contiguous to the falling blocks, men jostled the firemen, crowded about the engines, and crippled the hose with the cuts of horse-hoofs and the breakage by heavily-loaded wheels. But men must be much nearer angels than they ever have been in times like that, if such a fearful calamity could threaten, and no one be unreasonably excited. The Bostonians had been calm, as we have said; and their silence and almost careless manner were something to marvel at, until the flames filled and covered the great warehouse known as

"Beebe's Block." Then the sense of insecurity began to creep in; and, as the towers of flame rose to the clouds, Boston suddenly realized her danger. Men rushed, crowded, shouted, jammed; drove all kinds of vehicles into the crowds; and roughly trampled under foot the great network of hose, in which lay their only salvation.

Still the fire roared and crackled on. Bales of shirts, boxes of dry-goods, heaps of tailors' cloths, shelves of fancy goods, and costly stocks of hoop-skirts, which had been stored in the basement and salesroom until those great halls could hold no more, were charred to ashes, and sent off on the winds with every whiff of the rioting flames. Laughing at water and men, the fire leaped across Otis Street to the roof of that magnificent commercial palace known as "Beebe's Block," standing between Summer Street and Winthrop Square. This was the very heart of the dry-goods trade; and when the fiery elements crept down from story to story, bursting windows, and flashing along cornice and window-sills, it found a store of wealth such as few commercial houses ever see. Down, down, into the lower stories, blazing along the stairways, dropping down the elevator, and with marvellous pyrotechnic displays flitting out at one window, and in at another; while immense clouds of smoke, incessantly illuminated as with electric flashes, rolled upward, and piled themselves in crags and mountains like the thunder-clouds of summer. Into

BEEBE BLOCK, WINTHROP SQ.



OTIS STREET AND BEEBE BLOCK.

counting-room, salesroom, closets, and boxes hurried the consumers, melting safes, and crushing the granite, until, after one short hour, the walls fell away, the roof thundered and crashed into the lake of fire, and only a seething furnace told of the palace, which, for its extent, was as costly as the Escurial.

From this point the fire spread in every direction, and awakened the confident thousands gazing upon it to a realization of the fact, that even Boston *could* burn, and that, too, in spite of all the efforts of their efficient fire-department. From the building in which the fire originated, it swept down the south side of Summer Street, ebbing along the roofs in glowing waves, just as the half-spent tides of the sea come rippling and foaming up the smooth beach. The great heat created strong currents of air, and caused the winds to whistle about the corners and alleys as fierce and cold as January. Thus growing the more greedy, the more it devoured: and, making a breeze with which to fan itself into more activity, it shot into the windows of the dry-goods stores; consumed great stacks of hats and caps, and the rooms that contained them; battered down walls, and seized upon woollens and clothing; destroyed the paintings, engravings, and plates of a great lithographic establishment as it hurried down the south side of Summer Street, toward the wharves; into needle-stores and suspender-stores, worming around and into boot-and-shoe stores; taking all the food there was in a restaurant,

and crushing the building into ashes; into a comfortable home, and through a doctor's office; tugging at the walls of a calfskin-store until leather and fixtures smouldered under a strange heap of rubbish; and then darting with dexterous skill into the show-windows, and about the stocks of leather, of furs, of gloves, of groceries, which were deposited in neighborly buildings along the street. At last it crept into the lodging-houses; and, one after another, these homes of the many lit up with wild gusts of flame, and then sank down, melted and broken, to shelter the poor and the stranger no more; then along Bedford Street, which, beyond its junction with Summer, is practically an extension of Summer Street, taking a long block of boarding-houses, and hiding them in smoke while it careened and gibbered within. From them it flitted around the corner of Broad Street, and with long streamers reached across that thoroughfare, and ignited the dry wooden station of the Boston, Hartford, and Erie Railroad, standing among the wharves of the harbor. Coal-wharves and partially-unladen vessels, storehouses for fish and ship-stores, all flashed into blaze; and the quiet waters reflected far the dazzling light and the gloomy pillars of smoke.

A great wonder has it since been to professional firemen, and professors of science, and of course more of a marvel to those who have not searched into these things, why the fire did not sweep far to the south of Summer Street, when the wind blew strongly in that

direction, and when the most combustible structures in the city stood upon that side of the fire, and contiguous to it. The great fire in London, according to Defoe, exhibited the same unaccountable inclination to burn "against the wind;" and, while the fire-brigade spent much time and pains in preparing for a fight on the side toward which the wind blew, the conflagration spread with astonishing rapidity in the opposite direction, and the most combustible portion of the city was left untouched, although the breeze loaded itself with sparks and brands as it went towards the unburned district. It was only accounted for by supposing that the residents in that quarter were more devout, and consequently miraculously defended by the Almighty. The exemption of Bedford and Essex Streets, and perhaps the whole South End, could as reasonably be accounted for on the same hypothesis. We believe, however, that there is some natural law by which the flames were controlled, that will one day be discovered, and made the basis of action in all such great fires.

Meantime the fire crossed Kingston Street at the corner of Summer Street, gliding along the eaves and casings into other great blocks, where were stored the result of years of labor and the riches of many a wealthy merchant. Millions of gloves, stacks of laces, piles of clothing, carpeting (enough, it is said, to supply a whole city), thousands of hats, caps, and imported wares, all disappear in the heated flood which surges, and

dashes into fragments the mighty fortresses of Boston's most thriving trade. With linens and calicoes, silks and velvets, shawls and hosiery, straps and blankets, and the countless articles which compose a stock in the dry-goods trade, the dread element fed itself, and, by the flash of their consuming, lighted itself through the spacious apartments into Chauncey Street.

At midnight it crossed that street, still on its way up Summer toward Washington Street, and settled upon the corner occupied by Forbes, Richardson, and Co. It drove away the owners while attempting to secure some little portion of their costly fabrics, and, as if in anger, melted the windows, and, like electric currents, glimmered along from desk to counter, from bale to box, from floor to ceiling; and then, with one grand outburst, the whole store, with its stock of carefully-accumulated wealth, gleamed through the smoke like streams of molten iron. On into the great woollen stores, and through thick walls into the fur-store, streaked those ghastly fires; and there, for the first time, it relaxed in its fury, and, being confronted with skilful combatants, turned away to vent its rage on other monuments less favored in location and construction.

From Otis Street the fire made steady progress along the north side of Summer Street, destroying the warehouses and stocks of clothing-dealers, dry-goods merchants, upholsterers, venders of trimmings and furnishing-goods, sellers of sewing-machines, traders in rubber

goods, in furs and small wares, printers, coal-agents, grocers, restaurant-keepers, crockery-mongers, and carpet-salesmen, and including in that terrible sweep grand old Trinity Church, with its stores of traditions, its costly furniture, and embattled walls of granite.

CHAPTER V.

SPREADING NORTHWARD.

FROM Summer Street, through all the avenues which enter it from the north, including High, Devonshire, Otis, Arch, and Hawley Streets, the great destroyer bent its course towards State Street. The flames presented an impassable wall of fire from Washington Street to the bay, a distance of about half a mile. Throughout the whole extent it was pushed forward with fearful rapidity, and was soon into Federal, High, Franklin, Congress, Pearl, Purchase, and Broad Streets, consuming with resistless fury.

After taking Hawley Street, which runs near to Washington Street, and parallel with it, the fire attacked the rear of those fine structures between Summer and Franklin Streets which had for so long adorned Washington Street, that most frequented promenade of the capital, and soon after crossed northward into the buildings then standing between Franklin and Milk Streets. Large clothing-establishments, with their work-rooms

filled daily with thousands of sewing-girls; jewelry-stores; photographers' saloons; cigar-shops; confectioners' stalls; eating-houses; barbers' saloons; carpet-halls; engravers' chambers; hat and fur stores; salesrooms for cutlery, millinery, and furniture; wholesale apothecary-shops; warehouses for toys, books, and furnishing-goods; and, lastly, the new and ornamental building occupied by "The Boston Daily Transcript," next to the corner of Milk Street, near which stood the old South Church, — all vanished before the deadly magician, leaving only toppling sections of front walls and unseemly masses of rubbish.

In Hawley Street the fire found, as it crept in from Arch Street, carpenters' and painters' shops, printing-offices, paper-stores, manufacturers of straw-goods and printers' materials, together with private apartments; and, like a hurricane, it whistled about doors and windows until the narrow avenue was everywhere choked with fire.

In Arch Street were dry-goods, furs, paper-collars, straw-goods, and small wares, worth an enormous sum, and which were nearly all destroyed. In Bussey Place, that opened into Arch Street, there were vacant dwellings, dealers in woollens, sewing-silks, and furnishing-goods; but they only served to kindle brighter fires, and to make a few more men poorer.

Otis Street, on the corner of which was the second building destroyed, and which at one extremity forms

one side of Winthrop Square, was occupied by dealers in woollens, furnishing-goods, and hats, and by manufacturers of paper-collars and trimmings.

Devonshire Street was crowded throughout its entire length with wholesale dry-goods and wholesale furnishing and fancy goods. Millions of dollars had been invested in these large stocks, and but little was saved from the stores contiguous to Summer Street or Winthrop Square; and the heavens grew red and the clouds of smoke shone as silver above the ruin of so much wealth.

Franklin Street, which, in crooked, hap-hazard Boston, was the widest and best business highway in the city, with the exception of State Street, was the mart of the wholesale woollen trade, which had become of so much importance in the commerce of the city. There it was confidently hoped that the flames might be stayed. Alas! they were far more powerful than mortals; and they swept over and through the street with unhesitating rapidity. Can Mauna Loa be extinguished with buckets of water, or Popocatapetl be smothered with turf? Yet neither of those volcanoes appears more terrible than did the acres about Franklin Street at two o'clock on Sunday morning. The air was loaded with fire-brands; great sheets of fire were lifted skyward; and rings of flame curled away into space like great smoke-puffs of a starting locomotive. Every thing melted; and men would have melted in the

by-streets if they had not fled. The tall staff which had so often supported the nation's flag, and which was placed there amid patriotic prayers for the safety of our common country, was wrapped about with ribbons of glittering red; and fiery serpents ran lightly up, and shot away into the air from its smoking ball. But over all, through all, and in all, glided the gloomy volumes of smoke, hiding from view much that was sublime, suffocating into defeat such as thought to battle longer. The din was terrific. Enormous bowlders fell incessantly; wide walls rumbled into the streets, making the earth tremble; the wind shrieked in the broken and ragged towers left standing; while men yelled, steam fire-engines buzzed and whistled, and heavily-loaded teams rumbled by in their flight from the searing heat. Water from a score of nozzles hissed through the air; while crystal streams gurgled along in the paved gutters, contrasting strangely with the tumult and glare about them. Even Franklin Street, with its high walls of stone, cemented like a fortress, and solid as the walls of Nineveh, bowed before the fire-king. If such be its power, there is no hope for any.

Federal Street, the next below Devonshire, was practically the dividing-line between the great marts of the wholesale dry-goods trade and the markets of the boot, shoe, and leather trade: so that it held some of both branches, together with many important wholesale storehouses of hardware, carriages, crockery, steel and iron,

patent medicines, saws, locks, cutlery, plated ware, glass, groceries, clothing, and several founderies and manufactories. The fire reached Federal Street through the blocks which ran from street to street connecting it with Devonshire Street, and also by way of High Street, which was one of the first destroyed: consequently it gleamed into the rear-windows, and ignited the roofs of many buildings on the west side almost at the same moment. Soon the great avalanche rolled over it, burying it in clouds and fire: and those whose business-home had been there for many years, and who had learned to love its dull buildings and worn sidewalks, fled from them all with their arms full of valuables; and the Federal Street they knew and revered passed out of being.

Congress Street, from Milk Street to the bay, was practically the headquarters of the leather trade of Boston, and contained a great number of solid, plain stone buildings, built far more for business than for ornament, but which were, nevertheless, very costly and spacious structures. Into that street the terrific tide surged; and the first wave overleaped the buildings along almost the whole length of the street. It was ingulfed in fire for a long distance within a few minutes of the time when it first caught.

It was sad to think, as we saw the lurid reflections of internal fires shimmering with such ghastly reflections through the doors and windows, of the happy ones, who,

but a few hours before, counted the huge piles of hides which would be needed the next week to fill the fast incoming orders from their widespread agencies. Even then, when the heat of an earthly hell was crisping their all, they might be sleeping that sleep of peace which only plenty can give. Hundreds of thousands of men were directly or indirectly dependent upon this trade. Tanneries had been sustained for months to make that stock of leather; and many, many weary hours of toil had been spent in shipping and in storing: yet there in a few minutes it disappeared forever in the ruin of the walls which enclosed it.

The breeze had increased to a whirlwind. All was calm on the bay, and scarcely a breath awakened the rustles of suburban leaves: but the intense heat, and what the philosophers term "the consumption of oxygen" in the air about the fire, set all the currents in active motion; and so fiercely did the wind blow, that it was difficult at times to stand erect. Timbers were detached while blazing, and carried out into the streets; roof-boards were pulled from burning rafters, and sent sailing and smoking away towards the harbor; great quantities of dust, ashes, and rubbish, flew upward with the smoke, or dashed around the corners with impetuous haste. Spectators saw, between the puffs of dust, fire in buildings, fire in the air, and sparks all about them; while the roaring grew louder, and the cannon-like bursting of heated rocks became more frequent and

more terrible. Wilder and higher streamed the flames as they crossed the fated Federal Street, and bellowed into the solid structures which bordered on Pearl Street.

There they revelled with but little opposition. Crumbling and crashing as ever, melting safes, and pulverizing slate, granite, and marble, they clutched the high stacks of boot-and-shoe cases, and, with whiffs of their scathing breath, blew them in ashes away into the outer tempest like lung-vapors in the frosty air.

> "By Heaven! it is a splendid sight to see,
> For one who hath no friend, no brother, there."

Men prophesied then, and with good show of reason, that the greatest boot-and-shoe market in the world was destroyed beyond recovery. So much wealth, so much stock, so many extensive warehouses destroyed, and so much probable delay in getting new supplies to meet the great demands, would have disheartened many. But Boston's courage and zeal and hope were fire-proof; and, though there was nought but ashes to be found in the market, there was the best part of the shoe-dealer's capital — viz., his energy — left to start with again.

So great was the heat upon the west side of Pearl Street when the flames from High Street reached the corner, that it actually baked the inner finish of stores over the way, until they smoked and blazed into bonfires. Then the east side of Pearl Street joined in the general conflagration, and soon streamed through into

Oliver Street, where at last the fire halted, because of the wide unoccupied territory just brought to the level by the removal of Fort Hill, the unfinished buildings, and the skilful efforts of the firemen.

Northward, and still against the wind, pressed the fire, until Milk Street was destroyed, from the Old South Church, on the corner of Washington Street, to Oliver Street, with the exception of the new United-States treasury and post-office building, on the corner of Devonshire Street. There were clothing-houses, saddle-makers, thread-dealers, stationers, plumbers, printers, boot, shoe, and leather merchants, clock-makers, book-publishers, plated-ware manufacturers, wholesale millinery establishments, rubber-stores, paper-store-houses, wool venders, wholesale drug-shops, and sales-rooms for crockery, hardware, chemicals, steam-engines, and many other important branches of internal traffic. Yet the fire paused not, but ran riot with demoniacal glee, as it scorched through the windows, and drove the excited owners away from their own doors.

CHAPTER VI.

QUELLING THE FIRE.

LITTLE hope was entertained of saving any portion of the North End until after the fire passed Milk Street in the forenoon of Sunday; for there was then a perceptible lull and a hesitancy, which gave the exhausted firemen new courage. Little cared the monster for the revered localities where Benjamin Franklin was born, where Edward Everett once lived, or where Daniel Webster's family gathered about his fireplace; and, with more than usual fury, it lashed about Gov. Winthrop's homestead and the site of Widow Tuthill's windmill. But when the massive walls of the new post-office, with their nicely-carved towers, colonnades, and arches, arose in its path, it shook its lurid locks in rage, but respected and avoided the huge barriers of solid iron and granite which they held in its way.

There, by that temple, which, like the nation it represents, stood firm as Plymouth Rock, the great victory began. The mighty exterminator had failed in its hold

upon the Old South, notwithstanding it lurked and growled about that ancient pile so long. It had strangely relaxed its grasp upon Chauncey, Kingston, and Bedford Streets, after having them wholly in its power, and that, too, while being re-enforced by the wind. It had been driven from Washington Street by the united efforts of so many fire-departments, and had taken all that was inflammable, and much that usually is not, on the water-front of Broad Street; and, when it reached Milk Street, its path lay northward across State Street to Faneuil Hall.

But to the honor of brave men, many of whom gave their lives in the cause, be it said, that, before the demon reached State Street, he was baffled, and driven back to hide his ire beneath smoking ruins and useless *débris*. Banks, brokers' offices, restaurants, auctioneers' rooms, hardware and leather stores, on Congress Street, north of Milk Street, fell into his clutches; while slaters, cotton-brokers, bankers, druggists, lumber-dealers, coal and commission merchants, manufacturers of gaiters, steam apparatus, saddlery, paper, oil, rubber, ale, ink, glue, paint, scales, valves, nails, medicines, railroad-supplies, and wringing-machines, on Water and Kilby Streets, were added to the appalling list of losers before the monster could be checked. Liberty Square, with its carriages, dry-goods, twine, iron, drain-pipes, hardware, dye-stuffs, wax-works, drugs, and glassware, must mingle the dust of its ashes with the leather, the church,

the dwellings, and the barrels of Purchase Street, and the type, machinery, dry-goods, cigars, billiards, junk, boarding-houses, wool, and silks of Congress Square, Morton Place, South Street, Lindall Street, Bath Street, Pearl Place, South Street, Bussey Place, and Broad Street, before the grasp of the consumer could be loosed, and the awful destruction stayed.

Even the old post-office and United-States treasury building, which stood with its front on State Street, was assailed in the rear; and the last great conflict was had within its walls. When it began to flicker on the doors, and worm itself into the windows from the burning stores on the other side of the street, the valuable tons of writing which awaited transportation to thousands and thousands of waiting ones had been safely stored away in Faneuil Hall; but, as if determined they should never come back, it burst the sash, seared the counters and desks, crushed the beautiful dome of crystal, burst the pillars, cracked the corner-stones, and persistently leaped toward the news-stands and decorations in the hall-way, through Niagaras of water, and geysers of steam. It hissed and snapped in floor and ceiling long after the foaming streams of Cochituate water spurted in torrents into every window, surged about every column and counter, and gushed in a score of Minnehahas over the door-sills and stairways. That was a fair fight. Water enough, and fire enough; and the water came off conqueror.

BOSTON,
showing the BURNT DISTRICT.
COMMON
W. 4
W. 5
SALEM ST.
HANOVER ST.
COURT ST.
STATE ST.
WASHINGTON ST.
TREMONT ST.
BOYLSTON ST.
HAWLEY ST.
CHAUNCY ST.
FRANKLIN ST.
MARCH PL.
OTIS ST.
PEARL ST.
HIGH ST.
BROAD ST.
FULTON ST.
COMMERCIAL ST.
MERCANTILE ST.
COMMERCE ST.
CENTRAL ST.
INDIA ST.
LONG WHF.
T. WHF.
LEWIS W.
COMMERCIAL W.
EASTERN AV.
SARGENT'S W.
UNION W.
ROWE'S W.
INDIA W.
CENTRAL W.
LONG W.
MARKET SQ.
PEMBERTON SQ.
DOCK SQ.
CLINTON ST.
S. MARKET ST.
CHATHAM ST.
MILK ST.
WATER ST.
SUMMER ST.
ESSEX ST.
KNEELAND ST.
BEACH ST.
KINGSTON ST.
LINCOLN ST.
HARRISON AV.
TEMPLE PL.
BEDFORD ST.
PROVINCE CT.
BRATTLE ST.
HANCOCK ST.
SCHOOL ST.
TREMONT ROW
PRESIDENT'S W.
PRESIDENT'S
CURTIS W.
D. HAYES W.
HOB TAR
WALL
PEMBERTON ST.
ELM ST.
COURT ST.
SALEM ST.
HANOVER ST.
UNION ST.
FULTON ST.
COMMERCIAL ST.
NORTH ST.
ELM ST.
PRINCE ST.
LEWIS ST.
MILK ST.
WATER ST.
STATE ST.
CENTRAL ST.
CHATHAM ST.
S. MARKET ST.
CLINTON ST.
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HAWLEY ST.
CHAUNCY ST.
MARCH PL.
OTIS ST.
PEARL ST.
HIGH ST.
BROAD ST.
WASHINGTON ST.
TREMONT ST.
BOYLSTON ST.
TREMONT ROW
PEMBERTON SQ.
DOCK SQ.
MARKET SQ.
INDIA ST.
CENTRAL ST.
LONG WHF.
T. WHF.
COMMERCE ST.
MERCANTILE ST.
COMMERCIAL ST.
FULTON ST.
COMMERCIAL W.
LEWIS W.
EASTERN AV.
SARGENT'S W.
UNION W.
ROWE'S W.
INDIA W.
CENTRAL W.
LONG W.

It was evening before the danger was passed, and the fire at last subdued. Meantime the city had heard a din more thrilling and chilling than arose with the Boston Massacre, the Broad-street Riot, or the North-end Fire. Such quakings when enormous buildings were lifted with powder, and fell back crashing into rubbish! such ear-piercing shrieks as great beams slowly swung from mortise and pin! such bellowing as the winds lifted the flames toward the heavens! such incessant rattle, rumble, roar, and whistle! such clattering, hissing, and breath-expelling thugs! reminding the soldier of beleaguered forts and cities, about whose burning barracks bombs and cannon unceasingly boomed.

It was a sublime scene which rewarded the adventuresome spectator who visited the ruins during the "smoky period;" for the fire was far from being extinguished when the flames ceased to spread. Enormous piles of lumber, leather, dry-goods, and other combustible materials, still streamed with fire, and rolled up vast columns of smoke, seemingly filling the dome of heaven with cloudy peaks and cliffs. Through the lowering, ashy mists which hung about the outskirts, bright shoots of fire could occasionally be seen; while spouts of smoke rushed upward from every broken wall, and the strange atmospheric quiverings which are seen above a furnace, and which there were intensified and enlarged to a most astonishing degree,

gave a dazzling brilliancy to every view. From the corner of Summer and Chauncey Streets, on Sunday evening, the effect of these airy wavings was to make the whole spectacle — the scraggy walls, iron columns, piles of granite, and dim, smoke-enshrouded pillars — appear in motion, like reflections in a lake when disturbed by a wave-awakening pebble.

All that dreary Sunday night, feverish flushes of firelight discolored the sky; and occasionally some rubbish-heap would burst and flare with a magnesian glow, making igneous shadows on the landscape fifty miles away.

Boston by firelight and Boston by gaslight are, in appearance, two different cities. There is an unnatural glitter on the windows far removed from the conflagration, and corners are illuminated which neither gas nor sun has effectually done for scores of years. The faces of men and women have a ghastly incandescence; and flitting semi-shadows — not smoke, nor fire, nor air, nor the shades of any thing traceable — tremble on the sidewalk, the buildings, and trees, in an extremely unpleasant manner. The State House, the crown of Boston, standing above the rolls and mists of smoke, looked that night like the dome of the partially cloud-obscured Temple of Fame as shown in old engravings. A grand sight, worth a lifetime to see, and, alas! costing *many* a lifetime of the hardest toil.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PEOPLE.

BOSTON as a city is slow to anger, slow to hate, and slow to fear. It has become proverbial, that her people "always stop to think." Their faith in each other, which is a characteristic of nobility next to faith in God, has also become a proverb for the people of the West. Whether it be literally true, as Pres. Woolsey once said, that "the inhabitants trust their all to the law and the fire-department, without a thought of danger to disturb their social parties or their sweet repose," we cannot say: at all events, it so appears to the mere observer. When the alarm was sounded on that fatal Saturday night, there were thousands within sound of the bells who were to be losers, and yet who could scarcely remember afterwards that they heard the bells at all. There was heard the clatter of hastening feet on the sidewalks; for it was early in the evening, and there always follows a crowd of boys in the wake of the steam fire-engines: but the

great thinking, losing masses gave the bells no thought, sipped their tea, and read their evening paper, with that sense of security which none feel but those whose faith in the integrity and heroism of humanity is strong and unshaken.

Even then, when the whistle of scores of engines and the shouts of firemen made the city echo with continual alarms, and when the rattle of horses' hoofs and the clatter of many feet announced the hurried arrival of engines from Cambridge, Charlestown, Lynn, Dedham, Brookline, Providence, Worcester, Somerville, Salem, Chelsea, and other kind-hearted cities, the steady-going merchants of Boston hesitated. Could it be possible that the fire would spread farther? But when the fire had consumed the buildings and the great stocks of merchandise of many who were not present to care for their own, or who had hesitated too long, then began the awakening to danger. It was long, too long, but fully in accord with conservative Boston, before the fear came which moved to action; but, when it was felt, the streets everywhere suddenly burst into noisy life. The telegraph called in the suburbans; messengers with pallid faces rushed from street to street, carrying the tidings that "Boston was all in flames."

Then came the rushing of multitudes, the rattle of heavy vehicles, and, alas! the array of thieves, hurrying with reckless speed toward the mountain of solid flame.

Rumors of losses, of dreadful deaths, and ghastly wounds, added to the excitement; and thousands of faces which even the glare could not flush gazed upon the volcano, or hurried past to save what they could from the almost sure destruction. Then came the bundles, bales, boxes, that blocked the sidewalks, and arose in huge heaps in the open streets; thousands hurrying toward the Common or some distant street, loaded with dry-goods, fancy goods, crockery, jewelry, money, furniture, clothing, and some of every conceivable kind of wares, jamming, jostling, crowding, cursing, — more like denizens of some pandemonium than men of blood and brains. Some with worthless empty boxes whirled recklessly through the crowd, leaving behind, in their insanity, money, and stocks of inestimable value. Others carried valuable pieces of delicate fabrics for long distances, and then hastily tossed them down upon the sidewalk, or left them unbroken in the mud. Terror-stricken people, when once their confidence in the fire-department was lost, knew nothing, it would appear, so reckless or foolish, that they would not do it. Families, miles from the fire, packed up their all, and moved into the streets; while one lady on Tremont Street threw her best apparel into the well on the suggestion of a negro servant. The towns and cities poured their inhabitants into Boston from every road and path; for the light of the fire shone brightly on the trees and hills fifty miles away.

The wind — which rose and played with the streams and sparks, and now and then, with apparent delight, dashed into the crater with roaring whirlwinds, and carried up to the heavens blazing clouds, and huge ribbons of wildfire — wafted upwards, in some of the gusts, pieces of merchandise, account-books, and checks signed and unsigned, in pyrotechnic flashes, and sent them away, partially consumed on the upper currents, to notify the anxious losers in towns twenty miles away that their counting-rooms and stores had been invaded.

Then it was that the hearts of all were filled with fear, and dismay was seen in every countenance. Fire was consuming, water destroying, thieves robbing, and no hope of a cessation. Men became desperate. City Hall was besieged for the mayor; but as, in time of fire, the chief engineer has supreme command, the tide of human beings turned down Washington, Milk, and Water Streets, in search of Mr. Damrell. When these bands found the overburdened chieftain, they advised, threatened, gesticulated, and yelled, demanding a thousand impossible things.

But one call was heeded, and that was for powder and soldiers. They who so imperatively demanded guards were themselves a standing proof of the necessity for them. Then came the powder to mine and to shatter, and the soldiers to assist the police in regulating and protecting; but though powder scattered, engines roared, and the streets were packed with brave, disciplined firemen, the devastation went on.

The numbers and excitement increased with every hour. The noise of wheels, the yells of the truckmen, the cursing of hackmen, the deep murmuring of the ocean of human life as it surged through the streets, were such as to impress the hearer with an undefined sense of terror, — feeling frightened, and yet hardly knowing of what. The great city flashed into gaslight as by a single stroke; and windows were illuminated, and doors left wide open, which years of nightly darkness had never seen by gaslight before. Every garret was lit up, every hall-lamp in blaze, every cellar lighted; while up and down, in and around, with wild haste darted the shadowy forms of men and women, gathering together their most costly pieces of furniture and clothing, preparing for the speedy flight.

In some localities nearest the fire the front fences were crowded with clothing; sheets flapping in the wind, pillows and bolsters carpeting the sidewalk, chairs overturned in the yard, bedsteads partially protruding from chamber-windows, and the same confused voices and constantly disappearing and re-appearing bundle-bearers everywhere.

In those portions of the city which were far removed from immediate danger, and which were usually so quiet, there could be heard the rush of footsteps, the shrill-voiced warnings, the clicking of latch-keys, the sharp cling of door-bells, and the continual rapping on door and window, summoning sleepers to a dawn of fire, and a reality worse than their most feverish dreams.

Even dark alleys and the narrowest by-ways were startled into life by the flitting forms of men bearing homeward account-books, precious packages, and heavy boxes. Whether they were thieves or not, none but themselves could tell, and none stopped to inquire.

But as the night went on, and the wild fire in its conscious power assaulted the very heavens, the scenes in the burning streets cannot be described. Firemen in rubber-coats, dragging long lines of snaky hose along the flooded pavement, pulling it under, over, and through the intricate netting of water-pipes already laid; the curling clouds of black smoke above the glittering engines, and the flashing sparks beneath; the swaying of ladders; the knocking-in of windows; the spider-like firemen clambering up ladders and along narrow projections; the shoots of water dashing upward from the street, and outward from almost every window towards the consuming blocks; the unhinging of doors, and the use of them as shields against the heat; men rolling in the pools by the curb-stones to extinguish the fire on their clothing; the pushing and gesticulating policemen; the bee-hive doorways of mercantile warehouses, with humming hundreds flying in and out, carrying away carefully-laid stores to the wagons around the corner; the revolving cylinders of the hose-carriages; the falling fabrics hastily and carelessly discharged upon the crowds below; the shouting hangers-on to eaves and chimneys; the groups of daring, thoughtless sewing-girls; the up-

spurting leakages on the overtaxed pipes, and the mists of spray and smoke, — all, combined with the thousands of kaleidoscopic changes that cannot be recalled, made hideous the night, and left impressions on the spectator which ages of earthly life cannot efface. These scenes grew wilder as the devastation became more widespread, and as the night advanced, until it was bewildering. Men were calmer, but worked harder. The work was better systematized with each hour: but, the better the arrangements, the more could work; and consequently, like complicated military movements, it seemed all the more a chaos to the uninitiated.

But in the glad light of day which softened the glare, and took away those imaginary evils that ever lurk in the shadows of night, the scene changed. The appearance of the burned district behind the fire, and the city elsewhere, on that memorable sabbath, was thus accurately and vividly described at the time by Mr. Edward King of "The Boston Journal:" —

"The most intense excitement prevailed along all the lines of travel leading into Boston; and the early morning trains from New York were crammed with passengers from the way-stations, — insurance-agents hurrying to verify the rumors of their losses; prominent businessmen, who received the appalling news just as they were settling down for a quiet sabbath in their suburban homes; and a vast number of the 'curious,' who always flock to the scene of the great disaster. Engines

were hastily prepared; and, when the Shore-Line train from New York arrived (six hours behind time on account of an accident to another train near Saybrook) at Providence, a large police-force and an anxious and huge delegation of business-men rushed into the already-crowded cars. Two fire-engines were packed on a platform car, and attached to the train; and as it rapidly whirled towards Boston, and arrived at Mansfield, a dense smoke, or discoloration of the sky, — the dull, dun veil which the fire-fiend draws over his horrible work, as if afraid of affronting the purity of the sky, — was visible. At each little station the whole local population had assembled, and was listening with eagerness for a repetition of the explosions which had been heard during the forenoon, or pointing to the stained skies. Business-men, when the train reached Boston, did not wait to arrive at the regular station, but rushed out *en masse* at the Back-Bay stopping-point, and took to their legs rapidly for down town. The panic seemed to have spread as fast as did the conflagration.

"Approaching the burned district toward noon, one might readily have fancied himself in a recently captured and bombarded town. The crowds, although gayly dressed and rampant with curiosity, were far from jolly, and looked with frightened and dazzled air on the labyrinth of smoking ruins which had once been a mass of busy avenues of commerce. Boston's centre seemed suddenly to have vanished: the old familiar paths ex-

isted no longer. Truck-wagons, light express-teams, carriages, hand-carts, crammed the side-streets which remained intact, and were loaded with household-goods or masses of costly fabrics which had been removed with trembling hands at an early hour in the morning, when it seemed as if no quarter of the city could be saved. Cordons of soldiery with fixed bayonets kept off the pressing crowd, or, capturing a host of citizens between two lines reaching from curb to curb, marched them to side-streets, and gently expelled them from the vicinity of the crumbling and overhanging ruins. The roll of the drum was heard on every side; the sonorous 'Fall in' echoed; and those turbulently inclined among such of the spectators as had not directly felt the sting of loss by the conflagration were speedily subdued by the militia-men, who seemed to bear a full sense of their importance. Here and there a group of stout, fresh soldiers, wearing the traditional long blue overcoats and white gloves, but with their smoke-begrimed heads crowned with dilapidated hats, kept guard over some valuable merchandise piled on the sidewalks at a safe distance from the ruins. Now and then one saw a bustle, and heard indignant cries, as some ambitious thief, who thought to enrich himself during the *mêlée*, was hustled away to the Tombs; and on every side the weary firemen dragged themselves along, covered with smoke and dirt, dauntless to the last, although the hand of Fate had proved stronger than their human arms. Every bit

of vantage-ground, from the dread corner near which the fatal fire began to the water-side and along State State, was crowded with the motley groups of spectators, each asking a hundred questions in as many breaths. The vista from the vicinity of Summer Street was grandiose and disheartening. Flames flickered up from time to time from the mass of broken, seared, disjointed masonry, played around the cracked and dismantled bases of the great carved iron pillars, and sometimes burst out vehemently from the interstices of the *débris;* and great columns of smoke rose majestically into the clear air, and then formed into party-colored clouds which cast dull shadows over the scene. At a little distance in the ruin-field, the smoke almost shut off the view; and the fragmentary wall of an ordinary business-block, or the tottering section of some huge furnace, lately a row of houses, took on fantastic forms. Looking from Kingston Street through the burnt district, one could perceive all the aspects of a bombardment. Bazeilles, Auteuil, and Château d'En, heaped together, would not have made so dread a view. St. Cloud was child's play beside it. The scene was picturesque in its very desolation. Beyond the line of bayonets lay the ash-covered ruins, with a group of blue-coated soldiers standing out in strong relief against the dull background. A long line of workmen was tugging at a huge cable destined to pull down a wall. In the foreground a group of militia-men were lunching from provisions

disposed on a hand-cart, and kissing their hands to the ladies who had served the welcome food. A sturdy policeman stood like a statue, offering his broad back as a buttress against the crowd; and here and there a fire-engine puffed wearily, and shrieked impatiently, as if angry that its task had been so long and ineffectual. As evening approached, and it became evident that the fire was mainly under control, the firemen and their improvised human teams began to frolic as they drew the engines from point to point; but the levity created no echo in the crowd. With the descent of dusk over the acres of disaster came a gloom into the hearts of all Bostonians such as has never been felt before."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RUINS.

THE appearance of the burnt quarter, after the fire had spent itself and the work of destruction had ended, was of a vast city of ruins, the limit of which could at no point be seen, still smoking and steaming violently from the shock that had caused its fearful overthrow. Very little, if any thing, was left to show what had been. In the stead of noble buildings of granite and marble and brick were huge, giant walls, torn and ragged, and broken columns of stone and iron. The lines of the streets were entirely obliterated; and the ways were so blocked by great bowlders of granite, and heaps of *débris*, — in some places from three to ten feet deep, — that those who had been most familiar with the section before the fire were utterly unable to find their way, and groped about, or clambered over the obstructing rock, brick, iron, and still hot rubbish, dazed and bewildered. Pearl-street "leather-men" searched around the vicinity of the new post-office

BOSTON IN RUINS.

building for the sites of their stores and warehouses, and were startled by the sudden looming-up, right before them, of that splendid pile, out of the smoke and steam which enveloped and shrouded every thing like huge banks of fog. Sight-seers peering for the ruin of old Trinity Church on Summer Street were surprised by the unexpected appearance of some familiar object in the midst of strange and foreign sights, which proved to them that they were far away from Trinity, and working in a direction, which, if followed, would lead them still farther off. A man was seen wandering around what was once the lower part of Water Street with a sign announcing the new quarters of a bank, diligently searching, as one would search for a lost jewel in a dust-heap, for some mark of the site of its old building, which was not far from the corner of Congress Street; and men were constantly inquiring of each other what section of the sixty acres of the ruin they were in.

The scenes within the lines of the ruins were novel and picturesque in the extreme. They were bits of pictures only, considering the magnitude of the devastated territory. For three days the smoke was so thick and blinding, that no extended view could anywhere be had. There were life and energy and spirit at every hand. Here, in the midst of huge heaps of hot bricks, surrounded by fires yet smouldering and crackling, men were pushing the work of clearing away the wrecks, which had begun at the very break of dawn on

Monday, or of digging out the buried safes and vaults; and crowded about them, picturesquely grouped, were many interested spectators. Here firemen were directing powerful streams of water upon yet powerful fires burning and roaring fiercely; and engines were puffing in their nervous, jerky way. Here, comfortably fixed upon mounds of rubbish, with a huge granite block for their table, and smaller blocks for their chairs, was a knot of out-of-towners, who had somehow succeeded in passing the guards surrounding the entire district, lunching on rural viands, — lunching, in the midst of awful wreck and ruin, as merrily and cheerily as in a quiet, peaceful, country picnicking-place. Here urchins who had stormed the lines were peddling "relics," bits of crockery, pieces of fantastically-twisted iron, blackened hard-boiled eggs, which they energetically protested had stiffened in the fiery furnace, — queer formations displaying brilliant hues and exquisite tints, strips of charred leather, and numerous other oddly-shaped pieces of rubbish. Here guardsmen were seen through the smoke, pacing up and down their posts, or, forgetful of their duty, picking out "relics" with their bayonet-points; and cavalry-men riding and clambering solemnly and grimly over the heaps of broken and smoking stuff. One standing in the midst of the ruins, and looking about him, noting the blue-clad sentinels, the towering walls rent and torn in every direction, the broken pillars and iron-work, the huge heaps

of jagged granite-blocks and *débris* under his feet, could easily imagine himself gazing upon a great city destroyed but a brief time before by a terrific bombardment. One wall on Milk Street, by the new post-office building, looked just as if a shell had plunged through it, and made dreadful havoc with what had been beyond. A long, narrow clearing, terminated by a fantastically ragged tower of masonry, looked not unlike the path of a shell; and the sure finger-marks of powder, rather than fire, seemed to be clear and unmistakable at every hand.

At night the moon shone; and the ruins were lighted up by its mellow light, and the ruddy glow from the still burning fires, with a strange and singular brightness. A walk through the quarter at this time revealed a scene of desolation, which by daylight, when men were toiling busily, and things were moving over and about the place, lending life to the picture, was absent. There was a weird, grotesque beauty in the prospect, that was strangely fascinating. The fantastic proportions of the fragments of walls were sharply marked. The tower of Trinity, the most "artistic" of all the effects in the burnt quarter, stood out grand and beautiful, forming with its surroundings a picture resembling those of the noble ruins of ancient cities; and the upright fronts of buildings, with their windows bright by the firelight, looked like lighted castles in the midst of devastation. "The mysterious, intense, Rembrandt effects of fitful

light and shade," wrote a journalist in one of the newspapers of the following morning; "the moonlight occasionally penetrating through rifts of smoke, blending with the flickering firelight; the exaggerated shapes of lonely columns and irregular masses of wall; the silence, broken only by the occasional hoarsely-given order of a fireman, or, mayhap, the distant chatter of a party of women whom some one is escorting through the wonderful scene, — all combine to produce an impression, of which nothing we can liken it to will convey an adequate conception. The imagination may conjure up such a scene; genius, perhaps, might partially represent it on canvas: no words we can command can describe it. Shadowy, lurid, silent, grand, awful, desolate, fantastic, it possesses the imagination; and the adventurer wonders whether he is still in the body, a creature of senses and instincts, or a being as unsubstantial and strange and dreary as the phantasmagoria by which he is surrounded. If it were not for the occasional group of firemen directing a stream of water on some flame that the wind is fanning to some comparative violence of passion, and the half-dozen explorers like himself whom he meets, and who stare at him in a wondering way, as if his appearance in such a place, and not theirs, was the questionable thing, one might well suppose he had left the abodes of men, and fallen upon the chaotic surface of another planet, whose fires had been but incompletely quenched."

The aspect of the ruins changed from day to day. During Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, a thousand or more laborers were engaged in the work of clearing the rubbish from the streets, and marking the thoroughfares; others were toiling industriously for the recovery of safes and valuables; and large gangs of others were tearing down the dangerous pieces of masonry standing, — some working, under the direction of the chief of the department of inspection of buildings, with pulleys and ropes and irons; and others, under the military authorities, with dualin, — a much more dangerous and noisy tool. By the end of the week all the streets were cleared, so that teams could with a little difficulty pass each other with safety; the ways along the outer edge of the district were open to public travel; nearly every thing of value had been removed from the rubbish; and the work of building temporary structures had fairly begun. Yet the fires were not out. Smoke and steam continued to come up in dense volumes out of the cellars; burning leather, and great heaps of coal, yet crackled and roared furiously; and the ruins of vast proportions were yet picturesque and fascinating, and so they remained for some time. The guards during these days were exceedingly strict, acting under orders from headquarters, issued at the request of the city authorities; but many idlers got somehow by them, and constantly perambulated the quarter, loading their pockets and persons with rubbish which they collected

as "relics," joining interestedly the groups about the workmen engaged in opening the safes as they were recovered from the ruins in the heaped-up basements, and joining in the expressions of sympathy when it was found — which, alas! was too often the case — that the great iron boxes contained, instead of money and wealth, only ashes and poverty.

Photographers also passed the lines, and perched themselves on stone-heaps in the most picturesque quarters, taking views, and making of themselves pictures which sauntering artists outlined in their note-books; and many of the class of mysterious vandals who go about o' nights, and are seldom *seen* disfiguring the landscape of the country, overcame the barriers, and painted and posted on the dead walls, the sides of granite columns, and the flat surface of upturned stone-blocks, advertisements of all manner of notions and nostrums. When the rubbish was cleared from the streets, it was seen that the cobble-stones with which some of them were paved were badly cracked and crumbled; that the cross-walks were broken, in some instances, into many pieces; and the curb-stones were chipped and worn as by a dull chisel, or the ill-directed blows of a blunt hammer. All this was caused by the intense heat.

But more interesting than these marks of the fire's power were portions of the Milk and Water Street fronts of the new post-office building. The granite

columns way up near the top of the structure appeared like partly-melted candles, and the granite cross-pieces were chipped fantastically.

At the time of the fire, the face of the granite was peeled off "like a chestnut in a toaster;" and great granite-chips tumbled to the ground as if an invisible hand with mallet and steel was at work, bent on defacing the smooth surface and sharp lines with all the haste possible.

The militia-men were on guard around and about the burnt quarter for two weeks, day and night. On the Monday morning after the fire they formed a stern, unbroken line from Avon Place, along Washington Street to Water; through Water to Devonshire; along Devonshire, through Congress Square, to Congress Street; through Congress to State; along State to Kilby; through Kilby to Water and Broad; along the Fort-hill territory and the water-front; up along behind Summer Street, Bedford, Kingston, and around again to Avon Place; enclosing a territory of more than a hundred acres. Pressing against this line was a crowd of sight-seers all through that day and during the next, peering curiously into the smoke and dust, pleading for a passage through, or begging for some "relic." A multitude journeyed to the city, from all directions and from great distances, on the first days following the fire, and, by their conduct, gave Boston a strange, unnatural look; made it present spectacles more like what one

might look for in a French city than a puritanical American place. On Monday "there were pictures of awful desolation and ruin in one great section; and immediately about and around, in marked contrast, pictures of a holiday or gala-day kind." Beyond the military lines, but in the streets near by, on the piers on one side, and along the paths of the Common on the other, "strangers thronged unceasingly from morning till night, looking contented, interested, and happy, watching the cavalry as they cantered by, examining the wares of the itinerant peddlers on the Tremont mall, studying the smoky sky through the big telescope, or trying the lung-testers; carrying themselves, for all the world, as if it were a festival they had journeyed hither to see, rather than the destruction of a great section of a great city by fire." The militia-men were quartered in various sections of the city; one regiment occupying the shattered Old South Church. On Tuesday evening we followed the officer of the night on the "grand rounds," and looked into the venerable meeting-house of sacred memories upon the strange sight its interior presented. Here was a scene recalling that which a visitor to the old church in the days long passed might have seen, when his Majesty's troops scandalized the patriotic citizens of Boston by quartering in the sacred place. Men in blue were moving about, musket in hand, or sleeping in the wide, old-fashioned pews. A group were lounging about the old pulpit,

chatting and chaffing; and other knots, engaged apparently in the same comfortable and harmless occupation, were gathered here and there. The light was dim and dismal, coming from tallow-candles stuck into the gas-brackets, and held up from bayonet-points; and the air was sharp and chilling, the shattered windows admitting every breeze.

A week after the terrible devastation, there were little puffs of smoke still visible; but the great piles of broken granite and the shattered walls were silent and grand, reminding one of Pompeii and the crumbling temples of Baalbec and Petræa.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HEROIC DEAD.

HEROES in any place, or under any circumstances, call out our sympathy and admiration; and the accounts of noble deeds by sea and land, in storm, in battle, in venturesome attempts to relieve others, occupy the highest and best places in our libraries and newspapers. For the glory that gleams about the name of them who perform heroic acts, men cheerfully die in each other's defence. It is godlike to honor such deeds.

But what is exciting battle with its chances that favor of escape, what is self-sacrifice in mutual danger, or the endurance of suffering that comes as it can be borne, compared with the quiet immolation of men in time of peace, with no prospect of glory, or that their efforts will ever be appreciated? Of all the forms in which Death visits his victims, what is more terrible than death by fire? To die with resignation in the flames has ever been the test of the truest martyrdom;

and the number is not large of those who have met such a death cheerfully.

But to that sacred list of heroes the great fire of 1872 has made some noble additions. We would speak of them tenderly. We would give their names to history for a reminder, and for the encouragement of those who are to come after us in the disasters and ruin which will doubtless return from time to time as long as man is human.

When the stately structures of Federal Street were crumbling before the dread element, and while the firemen, with a bravery that was astonishing, were clambering over the roofs of buildings bursting with fire, a young man of eighteen years perceived the presence of an appalling danger. The wall of a half-consumed warehouse, which reared itself high in the clouds of smoke and flame, began to totter and sway in the whistling whirlwinds. When it fell, it must crush the adjoining building, in which had been Walker's carriage-dépôt, and in the interior apartments of which were several firemen, and among them members of Engine Company No. 1 of Cambridge. If the daring firemen were not warned at once, they would be mangled and killed in the fearful wreck. Who should risk his life, with the chances against his saving it, to give the needed alarm? Old men stood by, and hesitated; while the crowd of spectators awaited with silent horror the death of those self-sacrificing guardians of human life and property.

It seems almost strange, that, in the dispensations of Divine Providence, only one could be found; and that Frank D. Olmstead, with his education, refinement, nobility, and fair prospects, should be called upon to sacrifice an unlived life so full of probable usefulness. But the very traits of his character which would give him the most influence in society, and make his future a success, were the qualities which impelled him on to martyrdom. He was too generous to witness suffering without taking his full share, too sympathetic not to be moved to action when his friends were in jeopardy; and, notwithstanding the repeated remonstrances of friends and strangers who would have left the firemen to their fate, he rushed through the spray and smoke and heat into the endangered building. The firemen heard his call, and hastily retreated to the street, reaching the sidewalk just as the towering ruin toppled and thundered down upon wall and roof, demolishing with terrific shocks the windows, doorways, and projections where they were stationed a moment before, at the time when young Olmstead called them. *They* were safe, and the hero's work was done. The broken and shattered walls were scattered as if thrown outward by an explosion; and heavy pieces of wood, stone, and mortar, fell upon the sidewalk, or hissed into the street. The young man was just emerging from the crumbling structure, and had reached the curbstone, when he was struck by one of the falling bowlders, and fatally injured. The

next day (Sunday), at his home in Cambridge, his self-sacrificing spirit went to its long home. We looked upon the coffin, and into the faces of weeping friends, on the day of his funeral, and felt that no greater hero than he whose body lay before us ever drew a sword, or marshalled an army for battle. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

In the afternoon of Sunday, Albert C. Abbott, an exempt fireman of Charlestown, was engaged in the attempt to quench the flames in the rear of the old post-office. It was at this point that the victory over the fire was won. Had the fire been permitted to destroy that building, thus sweeping into State Street, the devastation would have been far more terrible. The firemen had been told, and felt, the full importance of making an effectual stand at that point: hence they worked long and hard. Their clothing was seared, hair singed, faces discolored, hands blistered, lungs cauterized, by the heat; and yet they flinched not.

Here it was that Abbott received the injuries of which he afterwards died in the Massachusetts Hospital. He, too, was just in the dawn of a useful life, when he gave it up for the good of others. The Thanksgiving evening has come and gone, and awakened in the hearts of many the most pleasant associations of life. But there was no marriage-festival at his home in Charlestown; for the bridegroom was not there: instead of music and feasting, there were sadness, sickness, tears.

His brother, Lewis Porter Abbott, had but a short season before been killed by the fall of burning walls about the site of Weeks and Potter's drug-store, on Washington Street. For him a widowed mother, a wife, and three children, wept together. As life is more valuable than gold, souls are dearer than merchandise, brain is more powerful than stocks, intellect more beautiful and sublime than the most delicately decorated temples; so their loss, and the bereavement of others who suffered like them, were greater and deeper than the sacrifices of us all.

Capt. Daniel Cochrane of Boston Hook-and-Ladder Company No. 4, where he had formerly acted as second foreman, was burned to death in the store, formerly 175 Washington Street, on Sunday morning. He resided at Boston Highlands, and left a wife and two children.

Near Capt. Cochrane's charred remains were also found the scorched bones of Capt. William Farry, also of Hook-and-Ladder Company No. 4. This is a short tale; and the sympathizing heart naturally longs to care and to do for the broken-hearted ones, whose griefs and trials may be imagined, but never fully known.

Walter S. Twombly of Malden, connected with Sheridan Hose Company, was also killed while in the discharge of his duty. It was a sad sight indeed, and one which drew tears from every close observer, when his widowed mother sorrowfully but persistently searched through the ghastly piles of smoking *débris* for some sign by which she might find the body of her son.

William S. Frazer of Hook-and-Ladder Company No. 1, and until recently a much-respected citizen of Bangor, Me., also fell a victim to the relentless, remorseless flames.

In a falling building on Franklin Street there were seen through the flashes of fire the forms of men attempting to leap from the windows; but they never reached the pavement: their cries were heard above the crashing timbers and the noise of explosions, awakening shrilly echoes in the ears of those who heard, which will never cease to call.

Lewis C. Thompson of Worcester was struck by the fragment of a falling wall, and instantly killed. Five other persons were consumed in the buildings between Franklin and Milk Streets. Forty persons were severely injured, among whom were Thomas Maloney of Worcester; Col. Freeman, William T. Woodard, G. W. Gardner, and Francis Croshier, of Boston; Charles Paine and Thomas Waldron of Charlestown; John Richardson of New Haven; Charles H. Roster of Malden; and William Fitzgerald of Boston. There is still a long and ominous list of missing, which doubtless includes many of those sacrificed that fatal Sunday morning in New England's direst holocaust.

CHAPTER X.

GOD'S HELP.

IT is natural for men in their extremities to turn to God for help; for it is at such times that man fully realizes his dependence on some higher power. It is indeed strange that mortals should so naturally and universally forget the kindness of the Almighty in those times, and on those occasions, when he is doing the most for them. As men make no note of things done well, as we stop not to praise the bridge that has carried us safe over a thousand times; so we appear to think not and know not of God's great goodness so long as the path of his mercies lies in the way of our desires. But let disaster come, notwithstanding it is so often unaccountable to us, and we first begin to appeal to him for assistance, and then gradually realize that God has ever been good to us, and the trial we thought a punishment is really a blessing. May Boston soon feel, in her renovated faith, her renewed energy, and in her new and beautiful temples, that the Lord is ever kind, and is as

ready now as ever "to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness"!

Ministers of the gospel throughout the country took the great fire in Boston either as a text, or as the principal illustration of their sermons, on the sabbath next succeeding the conflagration. It may be interesting for the generations which are to come after us to read some extracts of the sermons preached in Boston and elsewhere on that day. The following condensed reports we take from the daily press of Monday, Nov. 19: —

"'The Burning of Boston, Nov. 9 and 10, 1872,' was the subject of Rev. Dr. Manning's discourse in the Old South Chapel, Freeman Place. Dr. Manning selected as his text Job i. 21: 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord.' In opening, he said, 'The providence of God gives us our theme this morning.'

"Then, referring to the conflagration as one fascinating in general conversation till it wearied, he turned to the aspect of the calamity which belongs to the sanctuary. No doubt this chastisement comes to us for our spiritual profit. We must not be altogether absorbed in our brave plans for rebuilding the city and re-creating our lost wealth. We ought to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. There is danger lest we should be prouder than before, — proud of our opportunity to show the world what we can do. The speaker then

referred to the moral obligations laid upon us; and his prayer was, that the new demand on our time and energies may not interfere with the higher duties. And here he addressed particularly his own congregation, asking them to see to it, that, whatever else may fail, there be no slackening of zeal and faithfulness. Now, if ever, they must not forsake the assembling of themselves together. His relation to them made their distress very near to him. The services they were engaged in as a society he charged should be kept up. Of their meeting-house he spoke particularly, and returned thanks that it is almost unscathed. But it stands on the edge of the crater; it is in the hands of the public authorities: how soon it will be His people's again cannot be told. The soldiers and policemen have had it; and the pastor and society should not be so ungrateful as to regret their occupancy. If the worshippers are to be driven from it, if it cannot any longer be the place of solemn assemblies, let all thank God for the prospect that it is to be put to no mean or unworthy use. Its history is interwoven with that of the nation: therefore let the nation have it, if it can serve their need better than his people's. Will it not be a beautiful thing, he asked, that, in the arrangement of a wise God, the house in which all loved to worship should, now that it is wrested from our grasp, become a great public benefit? Its doors, instead of being open on the Lord's Day only, will be open every day. Every emotion of the human

heart is there called into exercise: it is the whole world in miniature: all its activities, interests, and pulsations, for time and eternity, are brought under one roof. He cautioned that his people should insist that it should never be used in a way which might corrupt the public morals, or be contrary to the New-Testament doctrines. The minister traced God's hand in such afflictions, and pointed out the religious moral. If it be true that the property destroyed was owned by persons who have large resources left, yet multitudes have been thrown out of employment, with no prospects of any thing to do for months to come. But few of these have any thing upon which to subsist till the machinery and appliances of business are again in order. He hoped they would not be unwilling to accept such help as they may need; that the citizens would not discourage the generous wish of other cities. We should not be too proud to be helped. It will do the whole land good to share this burden with us. Those who gratefully accept the aid may show as noble a spirit as those who proffer it. The lesson it teaches us is, how false the judgment which called us rich on account of worldly wealth! The sermon was full of beautiful, consoling thought, and practical suggestion.

"The Rev. W. H. H. Murray preached three sermons during the day; and a sermon on the fire, in Music Hall, in the evening. The hall was crowded to its utmost capacity, several hundred being unable to find seats.

Mr. Murray's text was Rom. v. 3: 'Knowing that tribulation worketh patience.' Suffering, he said, was not the exception, but the law, of life; and, from the highest to the lowest, tribulation was common to all. A catastrophe had fallen on Boston of a magnitude almost unparalleled in the history of the world. It was not the first time the city had been afflicted. It was cradled in adversity, and grew up amid dangers; but it had kept the same undaunted heart and persevering spirit. The wealth of Boston has not gone: it had never been gauged by a money value, but consisted in its historic renown, the evidences of taste, the manifestations of culture, the integrity of merchants, the piety and humanity which prevail. New York was entirely different: her energies and ambition converge in Wall Street, and the very blood in her veins is metallic. It was said Boston had lost so many millions; but they were only lost, not destroyed. Boston was a commercial necessity to New England and the country, serving both as a receptacle and an outlet for the accommodations of industry. Every village in New England felt the shock when those warehouses fell, and demands that they be rebuilt. Every class and order of production sends the same cry down to our shores, 'Live, rebuild, and enlarge your boundaries.' The generous sympathy of the nation and of the whole civilized world was generously offered; and the only way in which Boston could manifest her wisdom or appreciation was to proceed at once

with energy and courage to rebuild the structures and re-establish the industries destroyed by the fire. The heroism the people had displayed was worthy of mention, when men could be flung from opulence to beggary, and give no sign that they felt the shock. A city with such citizens cannot be destroyed. While regretting what was lost, they should be grateful for the homes, the mothers, wives, and children, which remain. Boston was a home. Men go to New York or Chicago as a bee goes to a flower, — to load itself with extracted wealth, then leave: men come to Boston to stay. Boston was perhaps the only American city in America, and her people were homogeneous: their language, their modes of thought, their type of character, even the caste of their countenances, were purely American. They will stand by the city of their birth and love. With the fire the spirit of selfish competition disappeared, and people were learning the true value of wealth. Such is a mere outline of an eloquent sermon well worth publishing entire, if space would permit.

"Rev. W. R. Alger spoke to a crowded audience in Music Hall. His subject was the relation of great calamities to men and God. After remarking the increasing prevalence of casualties of late years, the speaker said it seemed as if only in this way could God take the mind of man from his own pursuits to his Maker. The question would then arise, 'What, as revealed in the most enlightened minds of to-day, is the relation of the ca-

lamities of man to the providence of God?' Science had done away with many of the early religious ideas of men. After they could direct to their own use the lightning, could they longer consider it the angry bolt of Jove? When they could predict the very moment of an eclipse, could they longer consider it the frown of a god? To put every thing upon chance was a flat contradiction of the teachings of science; to attribute all to God was in contradiction to our own knowledge of a certain power to choose, which we possessed. The laws which pervade all things are but expressions of the will of God, which, when better understood, will clearly explain all that seems doubtful now. Chance is only the name which we give to an unknown cause; and, as all causes have a definite reason, there is really no such thing as chance. It was only a term of accommodation to express what we meant by ignorance of actual facts. The elements were only forms of the expressions of the will and providence of God. Men were set in certain conditions: and, when they conformed to them, all was right; when they did not, calamity comes as a warning. When our race was perfected, no man would suffer any thing, because the whole of mankind would, by their knowledge, be his guard. Without these warnings we could have no inducement to act, as we would see no reason for our action. This would overthrow all the system of our progression. It was the duty of men to study the causes of calamities, and the remedies for

them. A peasant once tried to see how far he could lean over a precipice without falling, and finally lay dead on the rocks below. One man would say it was the result of carelessness; another, of an incalculable chance; another, the judgment of God on his rashness; another, the action of gravitation: but the truth was, that the will of God, as shown in gravitation, had done the work as the result of a perfect and unchanging law. The whole human race has an indivisible destiny. The destinies of the parts are bound up in the health of the whole. God is incarnate in every man as well as he was in Jesus Christ. Mankind is always suffering, — the just for the unjust, the present for the past. The mission of this suffering is to crush out arrogance and selfishness, and bring all nearer to the truth. When all men have become as brothers, the end of suffering shall come, and earth will be a part of heaven. Let us, then, bear all calamities with a brave heart, knowing that, in his own perfection, God is bringing all things about for the best. Neither let us weep if we are shut out, as were the kings and prophets, from seeing with our own eyes the millennial day. Death is, perhaps, only the opening of a new door to greater knowledge and happiness. It is not the hand of a blind fate or of an angry God which gives us our casualties. They are something to be overborne and carried on as but the present veil, which partially hides the glories of the final consummation of the destinies of our race.

"The Church of the Disciples was very full. The pastor, Rev. James Freeman Clarke, read the extremely appropriate passages commencing with the fifteenth verse of the eighteenth chapter of Revelation. Mr. Clarke alluded to the great extent of the calamity, the effects of which pervaded the whole country and all classes. He spoke of a widow lady whose all was invested in insurance-stock. With the savings of years, she had ventured on a visit to Europe. Her stock was three hundred per cent above par when she left; and, upon her arrival there, she will learn that it is worthless. The rich feel this disaster first, the poor afterward. The terrible fire means *something*. To the really religious man it is a message from on high, and speaks in the loudest and most distinct of tones, 'Thus saith the Lord.' It repeats in a volume what is being perpetually said in a lower voice. An old negro, whose house, worth a hundred dollars, was burned down while he was saving a poor old woman, exclaimed, 'If it is His will, it ought to be my pleasure; and it shall be.' He little thought what a lesson he was teaching to the people of Boston who lost a hundred millions. The mere practical man has been taught a lesson; but the Christian has received two. The former is in regard to physical laws. The Christian, in addition, sees a ladder to heaven, and exclaims, 'Nearer, my God, to thee.' Let us not despair, but learn a lesson of prudence. How strange it is, that, in all these centuries, we have

not been able to prevent that excellent servant but bad master from occasionally having such fearful sway! Nearly every thing about us is created by its aid; but we have been guilty of the folly of letting it loose to destroy. We have built stately structures of solid stone, and placed upon them fanciful tops to aid in burning them. Our pride has been humbled; we have been taught what to build; we have been shown the uncertainty of riches; we have learned human brotherhood. Capital and labor no longer oppress each other; for the dependence of each has been shown. Boston flew to the aid of its daughter Chicago when in distress; and now the daughter is as prompt to care for the mother.

"After alluding to other lessons of the disaster, speaking of the great cheers that went up in New York when the announcement was made, on the day of the fire, that the fire was at last under control, of the noble reputation that the people of Boston had earned for themselves at this time, the speaker closed with an earnest appeal to his people to do their full share in aiding the sufferers.

"Rev. Dr. Webb, of the Shawmut Congregational Church, preached to a full house from Amos iii. 6: 'Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?' After some remarks upon the tremendous loss sustained by our citizens, and a review of the brighter side of affairs, the preacher took up the religious aspect of the matter. Calamities and judgments,

he said, are from God. We all say this is the voice of God. It is the instinctive feeling. And he acts through natural laws. We are under a government which embraces the minutest events. Some natural law is violated, and the penalty follows. Combustible roofs, like the grass of the prairie, fed the fire as it flew. Has it not been burned into our souls, that only men wise in foresight, quick to discern, prompt to act, capable of leading in the hour of danger, should be intrusted with the management of the city's affairs? The penalty for imperfect work or design, as in a ship or a safe, is disaster. This calamity is the work of Providence; but he who lets the matter rest there, without investigation, is a fool. Don't put pitch and pine in your buildings. The judgments and chastisements of God are for our good. It was never intended that we should have our home in this world: our home is in heaven. We confine our thoughts too much to this life, and we need chastisement to turn them heavenward. God checks and disappoints us that we may seek an inheritance in heaven. We seek to find entire security here. God's plan is to keep every thing insecure. He would lead us to seek spiritual and heavenly things; and denies us stability here, that we may seek stability and rest in heaven. We should open our hearts to receive the teachings of our heavenly Father. Let us seek spiritual blessing rather than worldly prosperity.

"The discourse was an earnest, practical consideration

of the great calamity viewed in the light of the gospel, full of tender sympathy for all who suffered, hopeful in spirit, and eloquent in presenting the superiority of spiritual over material objects in life.

"At the Somerset-street Baptist Church, Rev. John F. Beckley preached upon the recent calamity from the following text: 'Every man's work shall be manifest when the day shall declare it; for it shall be revealed by fire.' After comparing Boston to Athens, he claimed that the recent conflagration was a warning from God, and demanded an increased faith and love toward him. We had great cause for being thankful that far more serious consequences had not ensued, and that our homes were spared. In this respect it was to be regarded as a correction from Divine Providence, instead of an extinction of all that we prized and cherished. The disaster had revealed many noble traits of character, and selfishness had received a severe rebuke. The speaker touched upon the foolish policy of narrow streets, and the erection of large warehouses with combustible roofs; and said that a disregard of material laws was visited with punishment by a higher power. The crisis through which we had passed was a plea of God for a broader sympathy and love among men, and called for a deeper moral earnestness in the people.

"Dear old Trinity Church! Many tender memories cluster around its smouldering ruins, and its lonely tower brings mingled scenes of joy and sorrow to many

minds ; but the vital organization, the live church which the granite only symbolized, remains to continue elsewhere the Christian work which for so long a period has centred within the massive walls that crumbled before the flames. The first religious service in which the church has participated since the fire was held yesterday morning in the hall of the Institute of Technology, which was filled to overflowing. The services were conducted by the Rev. Phillips Brooks, rector of the church. He prefaced his remarks by reading portions of the fourth chapter of Isaiah and of the third chapter of First Corinthians, basing his thought upon the words, ' If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss ; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.' Fire tries not only the works, but the man behind the works. Men were prone to regard the outward work as but the symbol of the inward life. But which was greater, — the disembodied soul, or the unsouled body ? The true city was equally clear. None loved so much, or knew their love so well, until after the fire ; but there still existed in men's hearts all that made the city great. The city was not gone ; and yet it was hard, even while they felt that it was purer and truer, — it was hard to see the old city gone, though it would be built again better than before. There were tender thoughts associated with its old, crooked streets, where they had played in childhood, and where they made their first entrance into life, and embarked their dearest interests.

These associations had all gone, and they would never see them again. It was not well to shut their eyes to the loss, and especially to such associations of life. To have lived through the war and the fire was worth many a sorrow and trial in order to see the triumph of the spiritual nature over circumstances. They had seen the apparent value pass away, and the real value come up from beneath. One caution was necessary, — not to count this too low. It was easy to say it was the courage of desperation. This was not a fit explanation; for it was disowning the best that God had done for them. God deeply and earnestly sorrowed with them, and they should realize his sympathy. None knew how much they loved the old church before. It seemed glorified by the fire. It had been called dark and gloomy; but then it was grand, glorious, and solemn. It was so wrought in with human sympathy, that it seemed dignified almost with life. It was almost forty-three years to a day since it was consecrated. This was done by the rector, Dr. Gardner, on the 11th of November, 1829; and it was burned on the 10th of November, 1872. It had done a good work in lifting the spiritual life of the city, in consoling sorrow, in giving strength for duty, and courage to face temptations. It never could be forgotten. One week ago, Trinity Church brought to mind the building: now it meant these people, — their hearts and character. Now they had got to live not less than two years without a place of worship: and he

begged them not to be dissatisfied, but to stand by the old church and parish; to be true, faithful, hard, and persistent workers for the church. He then desired them to inquire whether it gave reality to the faith which had been taught there; whether it made the doctrines of the mediatorship of Christ, the regeneration of the soul, and eternal life, real. The Monday-morning prayer-meeting, which was established by Bishop Eastburn, and which has been held uninterruptedly for the past fifteen years, will be held for the present in the Sunday-school room of St. Paul's Church; and the Sunday school of Trinity will be held next Sunday morning at No. 36, Charles Street.

"Whatever Henry Ward Beecher may think as to the small *rôle* of Providence in the Boston fire, it is evident that Rev. Dr. Bartol considers the great calamity as a direct visitation from on high. The text to his sermon on 'Boston Now,' preached in the West Church yesterday, was from Jer. xxvii. 17: 'Wherefore should this city be laid waste?' The sermon was a remarkably fine analysis of the influence of a great disaster upon the human mind, an acute essay on the harmony of nature above and beyond any local derangement of the elements; and was, withal, filled with sound, practical suggestion as to improved methods of city building, and a severe invective against the spirit of lawlessness now pervading the country. The conflagration should be considered, not merely as an accident

which could be easily repaired, but as a visitation intended to shock the minds of our citizens into a due sense of the undue greed and haste which led to the building of mushroom blocks. The reverend speaker also severely animadverted upon the alleged incapacity of various municipal officials, and said that incompetent individuals were named for and kept in office because the majority of prominent men did not take the proper interest in politics. A criminal negligence and disregard for law were likely to ruin this country, unless some giant force could correct these evils. A system of rigid inspection of buildings would have saved millions of dollars: one half-hour's delay at a critical moment had cost the city fifty millions. The description of the march of the conflagration, and the prophecy as to the rebuilding of Boston, were exceedingly fine.

"Perhaps the most novel and interesting service in Boston, yesterday, was one held at half-past four o'clock in the afternoon in the Old South Church, — probably the last that will ever be held there. No words can add to the historic renown of this venerated landmark, which was erected in 1730, and is now, for the second time, occupied by troops. The audience yesterday was composed of several companies of the First Regiment, which has been quartered there while guarding the city, and a few citizens and a half-score of ladies who happened to learn of the event, as no notice was given. The interior of the church presented a rather novel

scene. The cushions have been removed from the pews, and the floor is strewn with the litter of a soldiers' camp. The glass has been broken from the windows on the side toward the fire, and some of the sashes have been entirely destroyed: consequently the soldiers' caps and overcoats were necessary for protection against the cold. The view from the windows covers a large portion of the crumbling walls and smouldering ruins; while a camp-fire was sending up showers of bright sparks near at hand. The choir-seats were filled with soldiers, and a soldier manipulated the keys of the organ. The services were introduced with a prayer by the Rev. Jacob M. Manning; after which the soldier-choir sang, 'Nearer, my God, to thee;' and remarks were made by Mr. Manning and Rev. W. H. H. Murray.

"In the Hanover-street M. E. Church Rev. J. R. Cushing of Auburndale preached from the text, 'Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.' He said, Shall a revolution take place, plague put its leprous bandage on white lips, a fire scathe a great city, and the ministry be silent? No! There is a lesson written upon our smoking ruins as plainly visible as that on the palace-walls of impious Belshazzar. He then discussed the objections to a special providence, and the operations of natural law; affirming, that, where we find law, there is the planning

mind acting. But law has no force of itself, will not execute itself: hence natural law is but the realization of the thought. Do these laws work without partiality? Yes. How, then, a special providence? Man has two natures, — material and spiritual; the first subject to the laws of matter; the second, to the laws of mind. This includes divine suggestions. The speaker illustrated this in various ways. He next affirmed that God does not permit such calamities, and quoted Scripture in support of it. If we *need discipline*, we may build a town upon a plain, and God will confound our tongues, and send a distemper in the air, compelling men to do the work of horses. He *must do it if we need* it. If, then, God could have prevented, and does permit, such calamities, had he been a *human being* he would have been held responsible. But God is wise and good, constantly teaching his people *their dependence* on him. Where could he have found a better place to teach this lesson? Granite melted, iron twisted, brick heaved and fell. Lastly, such calamities are also chargeable to human neglect: for such neglect man blames God. The speaker closed with the following practical suggestions: —

"1. Build well. Put no Mansard roofs on character. 2. God requires fruits (material as well as spiritual) in their season. 3. He rebukes extravagant habits of living. 4. Earth is a poor place to put treasure in. 5. 'Prepare to meet thy God.' It is a poor time to pray in a fire. He fully illustrated his points, and was listened to with great interest.

"At the Clarendon-street Church, Rev. A. J. Gordon preached upon the lessons of the recent fire. He took for his text Isa. xxvi. 9: 'When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.'

"He said, that, when a great calamity had befallen a nation or a city, the people ought to ask whether the hand of God was not in it, dealing with his people in judgment. There can be nothing superstitious or super-religious in such a course. Providence is too mysterious and complex a matter to be thus interpreted by our very imperfect and partial apprehension.

"The preacher then proceeded to draw the following lessons from the event: First, The lesson of *humility*. It is almost inevitable that a certain kind of municipal pride should be fostered by the constant sight of magnificent warehouses and public buildings. Granite is a powerful *dehumiliant*, to coin a word. It wears out the fibre of one's reliance on God by its constant attrition upon the outward senses. Our eyes are so delighted with the massive pillars and blocks which we have hewn from the hills, and brought down for streets, that we forget to keep our eyes lifted to the hills, 'from whence cometh our help.' The second lesson was that of *humanity*. Riches and prosperity are apt to remove men from fellowship with the poor and struggling. Many would be compelled to renew that fellowship during the coming winter. Some who had been independent, will have, for

the first time in years, to pinch and economize. It is hard; but it is a real blessing to be thus drawn back into sympathy, and made to have a fellow-feeling with the great mass of humanity whose whole lifetime is spent in stinting and economizing. The other lessons were dwelt upon at length, — the lesson of gratitude, in view of what we had left to us of our possessions; and the lesson of hope, in view of that 'city that hath foundations,' which cannot be burned, and in which, through Christ, we have 'an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.'

"Hollis-street Church was crowded with people last evening, gathered under the auspices of the Boston Young Men's Christian Union, to consider the subject of 'The Fire, and What to Do about It.' Seats in the pulpit were occupied by Mr. W. H. Baldwin, president of the Union; Rev. Robert Collyer of Chicago; Rev. J. F. W. Ware; and Rev. George L. Chaney, pastor of the church. The addresses of the evening were prefaced with prayer by Mr. Collyer, and singing by a large choir under direction of Mr. Sharland.

"The speakers of the evening were Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Ware, Mr. Chaney, and Mr. Collyer. They were earnest, hopeful, and eloquent, all urging the young men to remain in dear old Boston, and share its fortunes in the bright time which was sure to come. Mr. Collyer made one of the grandest addresses which he ever made in Boston. It was manly, strong, and brave, and touched

everybody who heard it. He spoke of the Chicago fire, and the hard trial it was for him to believe it a blessing in disguise; but he saw it all now, as Boston men and women would see it soon. If young men wanted to carry hods, or work at trades, Chicago was a good place for them; but there were plenty of clerks there now, bright fellows, without any thing to do In conclusion, he urged everybody to be hopeful and brave. Boston would be built up again, and grander than ever. It was much to remember that so few precious homes went in the flames.

"Rev. W. F. Mallalieu, at the Broadway Methodist, took for his text Ps. xxx. 6, 7. He said, As to the cause of the fire, there were two theories. The first was the inefficiency of the fire-department; and the second, the judgment of God. The first of these theories was inadequate, and the other unreasonable. The reign of law is inexorable; and the fire occurred and went forward in accordance with this law.

"Rev. Dr. S. K. Lothrop preached before the Brattle-square Society yesterday. He spoke of the calamity, and said that the query, 'What should be done?' would rise in the minds of all: but it must be considered as an order of a wise and gracious Providence; for with this view of the matter alone could we be submissive, patient, and trustful; and the securing of these latter qualities was the true end of the calamity.

"Rev. Robert Collyer of Chicago officiated at the

South Congregational Church. The services were most impressive and touching, and the attendance was large. In closing his discourse, Mr. Collyer said that the occasion called for a thankful heart and a more perfect trust, rather than a feeling of disregard for communion with God. Then they might feel, that, in all their affliction, he had been with them, and was ready to spread his protecting care about them, and bring out of things sad and desolating nothing but their future good.

"At both services held in the Beach-street Presbyterian Church yesterday the congregations were very large. On both occasions, the pastor, Rev. James B. Dunn, preached sermons alluding to the recent conflagration. In the evening Mr. Dunn took for his text Heb. xiii. 14: 'For here have we no continuing city; but we seek one to come.' The theme was the instability of earthly things, and was treated in a manner worthy of the occasion. In closing, Mr. Dunn spoke of 'the work before Boston, her citizens, her merchants, and her Christians,' and paid a just tribute to the heroism, bravery, self-sacrifice, and indomitable spirit, already exhibited, as an indication of what the future, under God, might present.

"Rev. Dr. Lorimer took as his theme yesterday forenoon 'The Right-Doing of the Supreme Judge,' and said, that, in great calamities like the fire, men either question the existence of a God, or question his justness: in both they were wrong. The fire was to teach men

obedience, and should be received as a lesson. In closing, he counselled these qualities.

"At the Broadway Universalist Church, the pastor, Rev. J. J. Lewis, discoursed on 'The Moral of Our Calamity,' which he defined to be a new revelation of the Christian religion in its three fundamental principles of the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and Jesus Christ the foundation of every thing worth the building, and of every character that stands the test. These propositions were illustrated by apt and striking illustrations; and the whole sermon was instructive and beneficial, and was listened to with deep interest.

"The Rev. V. M. Simons, pastor of the Bromfield-street Methodist-Episcopal Church, whose residence and church barely escaped the devouring flames, took for his text Prov. xxiii. 5: 'Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.'

"'Our death flies to us with our own feathers' was the significant motto graved on Julian's escutcheon, over which was painted an eagle pierced through the vitals with an arrow barbed with his own quills. The hieroglyph spells out the philosophy — the human philosophy — of our misfortune to-day as a city, save that our eagle, unlike the Roman one, should be pictured with wings of fire flying heavenward, with half a city blazing in his clutching talons. Destruction has flown to us on our own wings. We are disabled and desolated by the aid

of the very agencies that were most our pride and power. From the high heights of our magnificent structures, fortunes, suddenly fledged with wings of flame, flew away into the silence of the interminable space.

"Standing amid the wreck of our ruined hopes, with the accumulations of a lifetime of hard industry swept from us, with riches of stocks and stores, merchandise and estates, flown away as an eagle toward heaven, it behooves us to accept the situation in the spirit of serious self-examination, and with reverent attention to the voice of that Providence which admonishes us not to set our eyes upon things so vain, vexatious, and uncertain as earthly possessions.

"When men esteem what perishes to be of more value than what endures, holding it too often with a hoarding grasp, God thunders his judgment against the folly in the crash of falling walls, or he sends the coveted treasure flying towards heaven on the wings of the fire; and so, with the emblazonry of acres of burning buildings, he writes before the astonished gaze of men, and *burns* into their convictions, the lesson of what perishes and what endures, — a lesson they will not so well learn from the gentler teachings of his daily and continuous providence. The fact is, the *most* that any man possesses of this world's goods is not worth a moment's self-gratulation: it is no more, in comparison with what he does not possess, than an infinitesimal speck to the immensity

of God's creation. When men survey what they have builded as though it were their own, and as though they had absolute right and power to have and to hold it, they challenge God to push it over, blow it down, or burn it to ashes, at his pleasure.

"It becomes the duty now of all sufferers, and especially of *Christian* sufferers, to be cheerful. *Cheerfulness* and *godliness* are the lessons of the fire, the duty of the hour. Now is the time to honor the Master you have so long loved and served. Now is the time to fulfil the apostle's injunction, — 'Rejoice in the Lord *alway;* and again I say, Rejoice.' Now is the midnight of your misfortune, into the darkness of which you may send the illumination of your faith, brighter than the flames that blazed along the sky. Now is the time for the setting of bright rainbows of good cheer among the crystal drops of your falling tears. Now is the time to put all the two hundred song-chapters of the Bible into a grand hymn of thanksgiving, and send it, like Latimer's victorious martyr-anthem, sounding beyond the stars.

"And let us resolve henceforth to cherish that godliness which is 'profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.'

"Millions swept away in a night, and only acres of black, smouldering ruins remaining; and shall we set our eyes upon the things which are not, forgetting that

'riches make themselves wings, and fly away as an eagle toward heaven'?

"Take a golden crown to cure your headache; take a royal sceptre in your hands to challenge the approach of pestilence; bind a diamond necklace about your throat to charm away your choking grief; do any and every other foolish and absurd thing to defy the power of 'the powers that be:' but presume not to offer Death's doorkeeper money to buy your passage to God's summer-land. Trade not for transitory trash, — the gold and greatness of earth, — but rather 'for glory, immortality, eternal life,' — the imperishable riches and renown of heaven. Put not your treasures in earthen vessels nor vaults, but transfer them to the forts and castles of that city whose walls and towers shall never be wreathed with flame.

"The Rev. Dr. Rollin H. Neale of the First Baptist Church took for his text Jer. viii. 6: 'I hearkened and heard; but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course as the horse rusheth into the battle.'

"These words of the prophet were uttered in view of the many calamities that came upon the people of Israel, resulting in their final subjugation and captivity. It is not in my heart to apply the language of the text to our own citizens, faint and trembling, stunned by the shock they have received, and scarcely knowing what they have suffered.

"The excellent spirit which has thus far been manifested, the cheerfulness, the courage and hope, everywhere expressed, we must all approve and rejoice in.

"The firemen who labored nobly to stay the flames are entitled to gratitude. The city government in all its departments did their duty, — the best they could in the circumstances. If some mistakes were made, they will be readily excused, owing to the excitement of the moment, the fearfulness of the hour.

"We shall never forget, or fail to remember with gratitude, the kindly voices of sympathy and good cheer which came to us from other places. The words of Henry Ward Beecher, Sunday night, were prompt and characteristic. He remembered his boyhood days. Those streets aflame, or covered with smouldering ruins, he had seen and been familiar with in his youth. He loved Boston, and now, in her calamity, was not ashamed to speak of it. Her enterprise and benevolence, her schools, her churches, her merchants, her patriotic history in early and in later times, — it was an inspiring theme to him; and he worked it well, and had the full sympathy of his hearers and of those who have since read his words. All this we are and ought to be thankful for.

"Then, too, the voice from Chicago, how strange! and yet how good! A hundred thousand dollars which had been raised for themselves, and which they still needed, but thinking their benefactors were now suffering more

than they, they must send to us. Like the sailor, who, with a comrade, was upset in a boat off the Straits of Dover. As he rose from the water, and saw the people on shore making preparations to get a rope to him, he cried out, 'Fling it to John! He's just ready to go down; and I can hold out a while longer.' These calamities do often reveal the best side of human nature.

"Our own citizens, men in whose wisdom we have confidence, are, with sound reason, taking judicious and effectual measures to meet the present exigency, and provide for the future prosperity and safety of the city. You have already read in the public papers of what has been done to relieve present suffering and to provide work for those thrown out of employ, and the measures proposed for rebuilding in the burnt district. The State and National Government have generously volunteered to favor our merchants and prominent business-men in the enterprises they contemplate for the good of the city. And yet, notwithstanding all this, there is some occasion for the words of the text, — 'I hearkened and heard; but they spake not aright: no one repented him of the evil, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course as the horse rusheth into the battle.'

"I hope good sentiments will be uttered from different pulpits to-day; but it seems to me, that, thus far, there has scarcely a right view been taken of the providence of God in this event. The immediate causes of the

fire have been very properly inquired into; the narrow streets, the high buildings, and the Mansard roofs, criticised and condemned, as they should be: but there is a disposition to feel satisfied after finding out the immediate cause of a calamity. There is a sensitiveness about moral lessons, as if they implied that this calamity was a judgment of God, like that which destroyed the old world, and overthrew the cities of the plain. This does not necessarily follow.

"Physical calamities are not always nor generally connected with, certainly not proportioned to, the moral deserts of those who suffer them. The great wheels of the universe move with wonderful exactness, and do not turn aside a hair's-breadth to spare a good man, or to crush a bad one. Nevertheless, all the ways of God are instructive. The wheels of Providence are full of eyes indicating intelligence and design; and every circumstance which occurs in our history is designed to do us good. It is to be regarded as the voice of God to us, and charged with some lesson of wisdom, of encouragement, counsel, or admonition, which we do well to heed; and none the less so, but all the more, because blessings and afflictions, prosperity and adversity, may be traced, like summer and winter, to fixed and unalterable law. The lessons of prosperity are obvious, though more likely to be unheeded than those of affliction. God's mercies are designed to anchor gratitude to the bounteous giver. 'What shall I render unto the

Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.'

"They are designed also to prompt the recipient to do good to others that are in need. God pours upon men the bounties of providence and the richer gifts of his grace, not that they should be proud and selfish, but that they should distribute of their store as generous and faithful stewards of the Lord. God blessed Abraham that he should be a blessing to his seed after him. And wherefore blessed he him? — that in him all the nations of the earth might be blessed. The lessons of sorrow, especially of great calamities like that which has just visited our city, are still more impressive.

"One was to remind us that life, in its greatest apparent safety, is constantly exposed to imminent peril. Spite of human safeguards, there are a thousand ways in which the unseen danger may appear. 'We looked for peace,' said the prophet, 'but no good came; and for a time of health, and, behold, trouble.' The first that Israel knew of danger was in the awful tramp of the enemy. The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan. The whole land trembled at the neighing of his strong ones.

"Thus secure felt our citizens when this danger burst upon them. Other cities, Portland and Chicago, with their wooden buildings and insufficient safeguards, might be burned; but we were more wise, men thought, prudent and strong: our houses were of gran-

ite, and could defy the elements. But, do what we may, there are yet perils of fiercest kind which we cannot foresee, and which God alone controls. God's love is manifest in his great power. His fixed laws are chains to mightiest elements; for every night of peaceful repose, for every balmy summer's day, is because the powers of Nature are held in as with bit and bridle, and stir only at the bidding of the Lord. He saith to the lightnings, 'Go forth;' and they say, 'Here we are.' The winds are his ministers, and flames of fire his angels. He giveth to the sea its bounds, saying, 'Thus far shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.' He causeth the outgoing of the morning. Here, then, is a lesson to be learned, — our constant dependence upon God. This conflagration is designed to remind us how great and numerous are the unseen evils which God is keeping us from every day and hour, not by any miraculous interposition; not, perhaps, by any special providence, if by that a miracle is implied, a miraculous power that is unseen and everlasting; but by an eternal vigilance which sleeps not, neither is weary.

"Another designed, and, as a general thing, real effect of these great calamities, is to make men more sensible of their ordinary mercies.

"Many of our citizens, I am happy to say, have not suffered loss; and they feel grateful. And even they who have suffered think of what is left. They are thankful that health and youth or manly vigor may be

still left. They did not know till now how many blessings they had.

"The most important lesson taught by this providence is the precious privilege of coming to God in seasons of sorrow. 'God is our refuge and strength,' says the Psalmist; 'a very present help in trouble.' The whole of the forty-sixth Psalm was written to re-assure and sustain God's people in times of great calamity. The hymn of Watts founded on this psalm was sung at the recent meeting of citizens, while many an eye was suffused with grateful tears: —

"'God is the refuge of his saints
When storms of sharp distress invade:
Ere we can offer our complaint,
Behold him present with his aid!

Loud may the troubled ocean roar:
In sacred peace our souls abide,
While every nation, every shore,
Trembles, and dreads the swelling tide.

There is a stream whose gentle flow
Supplies the city of our God;
Life, love, and joy still gliding through,
And watering our divine abode.

That sacred stream, thine holy word,
Our grief allays, our fear controls;
Sweet peace thy promises afford,
And give new strength to fainting souls.'

"There is, I am sorry to say, another lesson taught by these calamities; and that is, their insufficiency to reclaim the wicked. Sometimes, indeed, an individual, like the prodigal, is led by trouble to reflect upon his misconduct, and to reform: but seldom, very seldom, is a sinner converted by any great public calamity, not even when it touches himself; and sometimes, perhaps, as the result of his own wickedness, he loses himself in the crowd, and forgets his vow. The language of the text does but describe human nature in its worldliness and sin, — 'I hearkened and heard; but they spake not aright: none repented him of the evil, saying, What have I done? every one turned to his course as the horse rusheth into the battle.' It is sad that this should be so; but so it is: and it shows us our need of the gospel, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit.

"These great calamities show people as they are, and, without the special interposition of grace, as they are likely to remain till the judgment-day. The skeletons exhumed from the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum are specimens of the diversities of character manifest under a common catastrophe. The miser was found clutching his gold; and, if he had escaped, would probably have continued to clutch it. A soldier was found at the post of duty, — a specimen of the noble fidelity and courage and fortitude which soldiers of the cross in times of trial are found to possess.

A mother was found with her infant in her arms, and hands uplifted as if in prayer, as now many a suppliant in the hour of sorrow is led to look beseechingly to Him who alone can help.

"In a word, God's providences, whether of affliction or blessing, do us good, or otherwise, according as we have a heart to improve or abuse them. The prayer of each one should be, 'O Lord! give me a heart that shall be submissive and grateful under all thy doings.'

> "'When gladness brings my favored hour,
> Thy love my thoughts shall fill;
> Resigned when storms of sorrow lower,
> My soul shall meet thy will.'

"The pastors of the Union Church, Columbus Avenue, made special and very appropriate reference to the great calamity in all the services of the forenoon. The Rev. Mr. Parsons preached from the words of 1 Pet. i. 7: 'That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.' The main object of the preacher was to indicate the religious uses which should be made of this terrible calamity.

"Other interesting discourses were delivered by Rev. Mr. Schermerhorn at the Church of the Unity, Rev. Daniel Steele at the Tremont-street Methodist, Rev. Dr. Miner at the Clarendon-street Universalist, Rev. Mr.

Potter, Rev. John DeWitt at the Central Church, and others in Boston.

"Rev. Dr. Talmage closed the services at Brooklyn (N.Y.) Tabernacle yesterday with the following prayer, after alluding to the Boston fire: 'Lord Almighty, put out the fire, and control its raging. Silence the agony of prostrate, dying, burning Boston. Hear thou the cry of the distressed and the homeless. O Lord! let our prayer be heard for those now amid the crackling of the flames. Lord, help them! Save their churches, save their storehouses, save their homes, save their lives! May there go forth from all this land a deep, heartfelt sympathy, such as not long ago we felt for another city! As that tribulation and trial was blessed to all this land, we pray thee that this tribulation and trial of a sister-city may be blessed to us. May we feel with what a very slender grasp we hold all our earthly treasures, and that nothing on earth is certain; and if man gets a whole world, and invests it in storehouses, he is not sure of the investment. This shall be our closing prayer: Lord, help that city! Amen.'"

The Rev. Henry Ward Beecher delivered the following touching address in his pulpit at Brooklyn, N.Y., on the morning of Sunday, while the fire was still burning. After the usual opening exercises, Mr. Beecher, without taking any text, spoke as follows: —

"I suppose that there is no one in this congregation that has not been made aware of the great disaster that

has befallen, and still rests upon, the city near to our borders, whose name is synonymous with American liberty, — the city of Boston. No such a calamity has ever fallen upon us. It is a national disaster. To-day, while we have had this bright sun, it has shone with a lurid light, through blackened clouds, upon that city. Her bells have been silent, or rung out only alarms; and while we have gathered together in our places of worship, or dwelt together in peace in our own houses, in that great city there have been no gatherings except of crowds in the streets, and no peace. Her churches have been silent, and some of them consumed.

"How great the disaster is we cannot yet say; but we know that street and street, street upon street, through the whole of the central and best business-section of the city, the richest part of it, is reduced to crumbling ruins. And there is no other city that can offer up such buildings to destruction. Granite — it is a child of fire, and would seem to be able to defy the flames; but it seems as if it sparkles and cracks, and is destroyed, — as if it were chalk. I go back to my boyhood, when I lived there. I remember all the streets that have been desolated by this fire. I have run through them of errands; I have played through them. I remember the stately old residences where the old families dwelt. Little by little the streets have been given up, street after street, to business-purposes, and gorgeous stores have taken the place of the proud residences, and changes have come

over the whole of this part of the city. And such stores! What solidity! what height! what capacity! It seemed as if ingenuity had concentrated in the building of them all its exercise. Architecture had done its best; and yet the flame has puffed out its lips at them, and they are gone.

"Things that seemed as though they would stand as long as the Pyramids would stand are to-night ruins. Looking down through those streets, we seemed to look through some rocky cañon or through some lane cut through some mountain; and they are all gone as if they were rags. The sun went down last night smiling upon a great, prosperous city: when it rose this morning, it looked upon a roaring storm of flame; and to-night it sets upon a wilderness of ashes. We can never imagine it, the loss is so wide, so sudden, so entire, so contrary to all human chances. The disaster is, in some respects, unmeasured, unmeasurable. The loss of products, of skill, of brain-fruit, has been transcendent. Men say two hundred and fifty million dollars were lost in twelve hours. How much that is, neither you nor I can understand.

"The loss of machinery, of fabrics, buildings, the blotting-out of so much wealth, is no small loss. The vast flocks had yielded up their fleeces through the season, the ships had brought in the fruits and spices and goods of every quarter of the globe, and they had been stored, and were just waiting upon the market: now

all are gone. The loss of capital is an immense loss both to the city and to the nation. It is ruin to hundreds and thousands. No mind can take in the conception of this magnified, aggravated loss. Hundreds are bankrupt. The man yesterday at ease is to-day full of trouble. The man that looked through a golden avenue yesterday, to-day looks through an avenue darkened with coals and ashes. Yesterday, gold; to-day, red-hot coals. More than all this, I feel the sudden precipitation of the calamity upon the poor driven from their houses.

"Pictures need not be waited for. In imagination we can see those that had little losing that little; and the little of the poor is more loss to him than all that the rich man can lose. Huddled in corners, driven out from street after street, unable to help themselves, with the crowd they proceed along. Driven and already despoiled, they must needs suffer yet more through the cold of the approaching winter. A year ago, Chicago was destroyed: now it is Boston. In the city of the plain, in the old city of the East; the city whose history is yet to be made in the Far West, in the city whose history is part of the history of the continent: so East and West have been joined together at last in a common calamity. Upon no other place could a calamity have fallen which would have touched so universally the national life and the national feelings as upon the city of Boston, — this city from which were sprung the earliest American ideas. By American ideas I mean something definite, something

tangible; I mean a conception of government that springs from the people, is retained by the people; I mean ideas of that faith in the assumption and self-governing capacities of man when rightly educated and directed to free institutions. I mean by American ideas a faith that men by their masses of the whole of society are of more importance to the nation and to the world's life than the precious upper classes, the few cultured and polished men. Boston stands for American ideas. Our earliest heroes of liberty are placed right there. It was from Massachusetts that Virginia kindled her torch. When the mother-country made war upon us, and we gained our independence, and the king was disowned, and government was set up, and when magistrates knew not how to begin right, it was from the Adamses of Massachusetts that Jefferson derived his earliest notions of the liberty of the new government. And, during all the period of the American war, from this fountain the national peace fed: and there never was a day when old Massachusetts failed; there never has been a day since, when liberty was imperilled, that Boston flinched. They have been the head of this nation in the best sense of the term.

"Here began American history; here American institutions commenced. Not that there are not other places: but the stream began to flow here, which has been as a river of life to this nation ever since, and it is continual. Other States have fallen from their eminent position,

have gone down and down and down; but old Massachusetts has never taken a step backward. Boston has never ceased to be a brain full of vitality, and full of the vitality of knowledge of liberty and religion. Hated it has been because it has been felt, — hated because misrule hates rules, because disorder hates imperious order, because passion hates intelligence, because anarchy hates regulated liberty; and yet, with whatever prejudices she may have been assailed, there is not on this shore a city, nor in all the plains, nor in the whole realm of these confederated States, a considerable town or city, that does not owe a debt of gratitude to the city of Boston. She has given something to the history of every place that thrives on the continent; and the whole nation has been her debtor for schools, for literature, for scholars, — a noble band, who from the earliest days, and never more illustrious than to-day, have been her glory; while nowhere else has there been so large a class of scholars, or if I may say so, changing the phrase, so large a scholarly class, who have expended so much in making the highest education free and accessible to the common people and the very bottom of society. Call Boston aristocratic; smile at her peculiarities as you will: her colleges make amends for all. And I tell you, to-day there are no such common schools on the globe as hers. There is no such provision as that which she gives in music, in mechanical drawing, the fine arts, all the elemental studies, and to the higher

advancement of knowledge, to the sons of her draymen or the sons of her emigrants: black or white, the poorest and lowest, she opens to them all the resources in her schools, without money and without price; educates them more munificently than the college of a hundred years ago did the sons of the rich.

"Her history is written in the best things that have befallen this land; and shame on that man who in the day of her disaster has no tears for her! God could not have laid the hand of fire on any city that would have touched the vital chord of sympathy so widely as upon this. It is not a local calamity: it is national. It touches the heart and patriotism of every man: it enlists the sympathy of every man that rejoices in refinement; of every man that loves what is noble in literature, or what is noble in American history. Let us not, in looking upon so great a calamity as this, be led into speculation as to its significance, and try to find interpretation of the meaning of Divine Providence. In other days, when men knew less, it was not strange that they tried to interpret the reasons; and some may say that this calamity was sent to humble the proud hearts of the people of Boston: as if, if God sent calamities to humble proud hearts, there would be a spot on the globe that would be spared; as if New York or Brooklyn would escape! Shall one pupil take all the punishment when the whole school is at fault? It may be said it is sent to punish avarice.

"Who shall dare to say that this disaster has been sent for any such purpose as this, or that it has been sent in any way than as summer or winter is sent? Can a sparrow fall to the ground without the notice of the Maker? No: but they do fall to the ground, and he sees it; and yet they fall. There is not an iceberg that breaks with thunder from the solitary north to sail down to lower latitudes that is not also a creature of providence; and it is the providence of the administration of Nature's law. There is a providence of God working through all life. He does work through great natural laws. So God sends cholera upon one nation, and plague upon another; but who shall say it was because one nation was Mohammedan, or another was Catholic, or another was Protestant? The prophets are all dead, and there are no authorized interpreters of how God acts. There is a moral use of this calamity; but it is one that looks toward the future. It asks not why this was done; but, this being done, how shall we make benefit out of that which is disaster? We are to interpret in the future, not in the past.

"Cities which are the grandest products of civilization have had the most stumbling irregularities of histories. Some have grown almost by accident, although certain great laws determined their position; yet much is left to bungling chance, or individual caprice and whim. Why should there be narrow streets? Individual rights have been protected, to block up the way,

and hinder public advancement; and this has prevented economy, and set at nought wisdom, cleanliness, sewerage. Things which are comparatively unimportant when families live in the fields become of vital interest when ten thousands of families are huddled together in large cities, where hundreds of thousands of men are making malaria by their breath, by their offal, by all their filth. Is it wise, then, to dwell thus? And yet men learned nothing of these things till the plague taught them; and the fever and the plague are the architects of London. The plague and the fever, the cholera and desolation, have been the architects of many and many a city; and these diseases are but Nature walking with her secrets unrolled, — a teacher, a schoolmaster, — teaching men wisdom. Famine taught the necessity of husbandry. David thought that the three years of famine was because he numbered the people. Are we, then, to breed a famine every ten years when we take the census? But improvident people — people like the Italians, that have shorn their land of the forests, and so have their seasons of deluge — believe them to be visitations of Providence; and they pray that they may be averted. Instead of praying to God, they should plant trees. Is it not God? Yes; but men do not understand what he says. They say, 'Pray and repent;' and that is all very well. These things ought to be done, but not leave the other undone. The voice of God warns man not to shear the earth of its forests, nor

to live in uncleanly, crowded streets. The voice of God in the pestilence warns man to live healthy. The voice of Nature teaches man by terrible lessons how to improve life and human cities.

"I think I may say, without any fear of contradiction, that this fire is not an accident: it is not an event sprung off from the great natural law. The city had violated certain great natural laws. Was it right to have streets so narrow that the flames could reach across so easily? People say it has been so three hundred years, and there has been no fire. Yes, so there are plants that take a hundred years to bloom; but they do bloom every hundred years. There is a city not far from here that may learn a lesson about this one of these days. Was it necessary that buildings should be carried up story upon story, not fire-proof, vast in height, and that then a cap should be set upon them, quick to take fire, and out of the reach of firemen? Is it wise to lay the foundations of them solid, to carry up the first story fire-proof, the second story fire-proof, the third, the fourth, the fifth story, all fire-proof, and then put a Mansard roof on the top of all, to take fire, and scatter sparks around the neighborhood?

"These great buildings which are our pride and admiration, admirable for business-purposes, are now, as it proves, although this was not intended by the architect, admirable for fire. But territory is small, and land is valuable; and they cannot afford to build other than

narrow streets. Can they afford to burn up again? Do you suppose, if the streets had been broad, wide avenues; do you suppose, if there had been interjected here and there an open square or some small park, — there would have been any such conflagration? Do you not see what a contracted lane there was, — a direct provocation and temptation to fire, with an invitation to the fire-devil sitting on every Mansard roof? If Boston repeats her error now, after suffering, it will be because this fire has been without any profit. We also learn that it is not enough in constructing public buildings that they should be made convenient for business: there is a lesson in this, — that every complete business-house should be a fire-department as well; that there should be such instrumentalities, such hydraulic contrivances, that every house could take care of itself.

"We have learned to build hollow walls, how to carry air and light and heat and water through all the house: and it is but a step beyond this to make every house an engine-house, and every man a fireman; every building fire-proof, or with the means of extinguishing fire. Here are lessons to be learned by this fire. Instead of asking if God meant to humble Boston, let us look into the future, and see what are the lessons to be learned from such a conflagration as this. Let us hope, that, in ten years hence, Boston, that to-night mourns the calamity, will give thanks to God for the benefaction. Meanwhile there are some thoughts that are proper. You should

never see a calamity befall another man without taking home the consideration, 'It may befall me.' When Death knocks at your neighbor's door, it may be on its way to you. When blight desolates another man's field, it is to teach you likewise that your own fields may come to canker and sorrow. When great calamities befall other cities, it ought to warn us that it might befall ours."

Mr. Beecher concluded with an earnest hope that the nation would come to the relief of the suffering city, and help to bear its burden.

CHAPTER XI.

MAN'S HELP.

BOSTON did not go to the nation; but the nation came to her. The proud merchants could not, would not, beg; and thanks be unto God for the generous hearts and open hands which he raised up everywhere about us!

Chicago, in her gratitude for the assistance which Boston had given her, was the first to offer sympathy and funds. We cannot forbear, in the opening records of that great work, to quote at length the speech of Wirt Dexter, Esq., in a mass-meeting, at which Mayor Medill presided, held in Chicago for the purpose of sending aid to the "sufferers by the great fire in Boston:" —

"With a little disability of voice that I labor under, I am afraid I shall not be heard unless gentlemen will be kind enough to stop all movement back and forth upon the floor: if they do that, I believe we shall find it possible to hear a portion, at least, of what is said.

"The gentleman at my right asks me about the money

that is in the hands of the Relief Society. There is a considerable fund, — how much, precisely, I am not able to say: a portion of it is not yet collected, and some may not come to us at all. We have large engagements. We need — I say, by we, the sufferers of Chicago — all the money that the Relief Society has in its treasury; but we do not need it now, and perhaps Boston does. We need it next month, or the month after. She may need it to-morrow; and we propose to share with her, to some extent, the bounty we have received, trusting that Providence may, in the future of a rigid winter, withhold the icy frost, and temper the severe winds to our condition, if we act in this way. (Cheers.)

"But that is not the question that particularly concerns the people with upturned faces before me. What are you to do as citizens of Chicago? The relief-money came from Ohio, from Pennsylvania, from Boston, from New York, and from the uttermost parts of the earth. It never has cost you any thing; you do not give any thing when you give it: and the question returns, What are you, in the light of what Boston has done, and in the name of God and humanity, to offer here to-day to do? (Cheers.) Gentlemen, allow me to call your attention a moment to this question. What place is it that has been stricken? Boston, the historic city of America; I think, the greatest of all our cities; not, perhaps, in bulk, nor in area, nor in population, but in character, in education, in religion, in asylums, in hospitals, in chari-

ties, in every thing (cheers), — in every thing that a consummate and perfect civilization can do towards developing the abilities of the active, and ministering to the wants of the helpless. This city, gentlemen, was swept yesterday by a fire that made sad havoc. I believe this city has no equal on this continent; I believe it has no equal on the face of God's green earth. Think what Boston is and has been in the history of this country! The liberty that we rejoice in and possess sprang from her loins. She gave it birth, and she afterwards defended it. She was the first in the Revolution, and the first in the Rebellion. The sons of Massachusetts have suffered two massacres for our sake, — one at Boston, and the other at Baltimore. (Cheers.) Now, gentlemen, I believe the history of Massachusetts to be that of American civilization and American liberty.

"But, aside from the general considerations that will pervade every home on either side of the Rocky Mountains to-day, the people of Boston are endeared to us in a particular and tender manner. A year ago to-day, and a little more, this same devastating element swept away our homes, our stores, and our places of worship, and we sat in the blackness of darkness. We sat down in ashes, enveloped in an unutterable woe. O Heavens! what woe it was! We felt as if we were forsaken, that God's providence had left us, and there we were helpless in the night. But in a little while, gentlemen, from smaller towns and from large cities, and from near-

by places that had hitherto been our rivals, and from far-off points that did not speak our language, came words of cheer, and gifts of love, until the electric sympathy encircled the whole civilized globe, and poured its fruit upon our wounds, and we were healed. The arm of the civilized world was thrown around us, and encircled and sustained us; and we stood upon our feet again. O gentlemen! we were brought then to a just understanding of all the little differences that mar our common life: they all went down before human nature; they were all hushed in the presence of those calamities; and that master-spirit of sympathy which came from God on high quieted every difference of religion, of government, and of race, and pronounced the brotherhood of the human family. (Cheers.)

"Foremost among these comforters came Boston to us. And how did she come? Did she say, 'Do you want any thing?' No. Did she ask any questions? No. Go back thirteen months, and let me read you the first despatch that came from that glorious people, that capital of New-England industry and intelligence and heart: —

"'Boston sends her warmest sympathies to Chicago, and will do her utmost to aid you. What do you need?

"'WM. GASTON, *Mayor*.'

"About an hour afterward came this: —

"'You are authorized to draw on Kidder, Peabody, and Co., of this city, for the sum of a hundred thousand

dollars for the relief of the suffering. (Cheers.) The undersigned, committee of citizens of Boston, will reach Chicago Saturday morning.'

"They did not send it by express; they did not trust to the telegraph: they came with it in their arms, and their hearts full of love, and their eyes full of tears, and said, 'Here is our gift; and let us add our personal efforts besides.' That is the way Boston treated us. A day afterward came the following: —

"'The Boston crockery and glass wholesale dealers shipped this day to your care twenty-five crates of plates, mugs, cups, tea-pots, tea-pitchers, wash-basins, platters, and tumblers. We follow them.'

"We have said sometimes that New-England people are cautious, that they are careful, that they are close. They may be thrifty; but it is to gather money to assuage human sufferings with. (Cheers.) They may be close; but it is to hoard money to do God's work with. How soon they came! I think it is on the next despatch that I minuted, 'No use to answer, because they are here.' Then after that comes this: 'Give us the particulars of what more you want.' It would seem as though they had covered our wants. They had sent shawls for the cold; they had sent tea for the aged; they had sent every comfort: but their hearts reached out to us. They had sent money; but they said, 'Let us do more for you yet.'

"Good William Gray, that noble man, walked into the office, and laid down the first package of twenty-five thousand dollars. We cut the strings; we sent it to the water-works: it paid your men there, and set the water coursing through the pipes of the city again. (Cheers.) That is what Boston did for you. Then comes another despatch: —

"'We send you some more shawls; we send you some blankets; and we send you lamps and lanterns.'

"That was a lantern lighted from on high; that was a divine beacon, an inextinguishable light. They knew we were desolate; they knew the light had gone out in our homes; and they came clear from New England, those blessed men, with all these things, and brought their lanterns, that they might minister to us in the darkness that enveloped us. (Cheers.)

"Why, gentlemen, you cannot destroy such a people. The fire that swept through Summer and Pearl Streets has left nearly every thing that is valuable. There may not be a boot or a shoe there; but such a people are divinely shod: and this is the way they met us; this is way they came to us. Now, what shall we do? I understand that we are a poor people; that we are a bruised reed; that we are tired and worn with a year of unparalleled vexation; that money is not abundant: but, gentlemen, let us do something, — do the best we can; and as we acquit ourselves to Boston, so we do to

the world that gave to us. It is not a gift; it is a debt. It is not charity; it is gratitude: and I tell you that the money you give to-day you will find to be the jewels hereafter which you have kept. (Cheers.)

"Now, what do the Relief Society think they can do? As I have said, we may want this money; we can use it here: but we can spare it for a little while, and, perhaps, trust to the future. We are your trustees in administering this money. We hold it in trust for the people and for the city; and, if they shall approve our action, we propose, — if this meeting, and his Honor the mayor, and the city authorities, shall approve our action — the Relief Society propose, to send this despatch to Boston: —

"*Hon. William Gray, Chairman:* —

"We thank God, that, if you need it, the Relief Society can send your afflicted city a hundred thousand dollars. (Cheers.) When we remember the prompt and generous way in which you came to our help a year ago, we wish it were ten times as much. May Heaven sustain your noble people! (Cheers.)

"WIRT DEXTER,

"*Chairman Executive Com.*

And we have appointed a committee, consisting of Laird Collier, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Fairbanks, and C. G. Hammond, to go to Boston, as they came to us, to manifest ourselves by a visible presence and an active personal sympathy.

"Now, gentlemen, aside from the Relief Society, let the people of Chicago see that this dark page in the history of Boston be not finished until we write upon it in letters of imperishable lustre some adequate return for the tender kindness we experienced from them in the darkest hour we shall ever know." (Cheers.)

Mr. Dexter's forcible remarks met with hearty approval; and the committee started for Boston at once.

The following despatches were sent to the Boston Young Men's Christian Association: —

CHICAGO Y. M. C. A., Nov. 11, 1872.

DEAR ROWLAND, — What shall I say? My pen refuses to write what I feel. But I want to say we are with you in your troubles. *What* do you want, — money, clothing, provisions, or what? Last Sunday we raised in our Mission Sunday School between five and six hundred dollars for you. I would like to have it go for the soul of man more than the body. I think the world will look after the bodies of men, and Christians ought to look to the souls. I think the association can raise ten thousand dollars in cash at once for you, and more, if you say the word.

Your loving friend and brother,

D. L. MOODY.

CHICAGO, Nov. 13, 1872.

L. P. ROWLAND, Boston Y. M. C. A., — Draw on us for five thousand dollars as you need.

D. L. MOODY, Y. M. C. A., Chicago.

Another despatch said, —

"The Masons of Chicago, deeply sensible of their obligations to the craft in Massachusetts for prompt and generous aid in their time of distress, are anxious to do their duty toward their brethren of Boston who are sufferers by the fire, by reciprocal action. Make known your needs at once."

After the arrival of the committee from Chicago having in charge the funds raised in that city, a meetting of the citizens of Boston was held at Tremont Temple. The Rev. Robert Laird Collier was present, and, on being introduced by Mayor Gaston, was greeted with a storm of applause. He said Chicago was in bonds, and the debtor of Boston. Their memories were quick last Sunday when the news came that a great fire was raging in Boston, from whence came the best things that Chicago had. After her fire, Chicago beheld as the first money sent them twenty-five thousand dollars from Boston, laid upon the mayor's table by the Hon. Mr. Gray. (Applause.) The banks had been burned, and Chicago was without gas and water for want of money to pay off the laborers; but that money was used for their wages, and the articles were procured. Boston had sent Chicago half a million of money, besides thousands of garments and other useful articles. The Chicago Committee had now five hundred thousand dollars in their treasury, with one thousand families to

support; but Boston should have all of it if she needed. They came together last Monday, and agreed to offer all in their power. Citizens subscribed fifty thousand dollars within thirty minutes at one meeting for Boston. He would say, not only that this money was for Boston, but that she had *got to take it.* Her sewing-girls and others out of employment would need this money; and they *must* have it. When the speaker was here last year, he was told that the very district now in ashes was indestructible by fire. Boston should see to it, when she rebuilt, that she did not pile a lumber-yard on the top of her iron and granite buildings, and that she widened her streets so as to give a lesser chance to the flames.

Mr. Collier concluded amid great applause and cheers.

Another telegram was received, from the grocers of Chicago: —

CHICAGO, Nov. 12.

NASH, SPAULDING, and Co.: —

Despatch received. The grocers of Chicago congratulate you on your escape from loss. A grocers' fund is being raised for your distribution.

STEWART, GRAU, MCVEAH, FOWLE, SPRAGUE, DANA and DOANE, and others.

So numerous were the offers of relief, and so boundless seemed the charity of Chicago, that Boston could

not bear to let that city, so recently visited by a greater calamity, do any thing more. So despatches were sent back, many of which were even more emphatic than the following: —

BOSTON, Nov. 12.

J. W. DOANE, Chicago, — There is no distress or immediate want. The poor are taken care of for the present. Chicago has borne her share.

"Chicago" will be to Bostonians ever a synonyme for measureless generosity and Christian sympathy. Such exhibitions of brotherly love awaken emotions which are deeper than thought, and too inspiring for expression. God bless Chicago!

On the return of the committee from their charitable work in Boston, they published the following report: —

To the Board of Directors of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society.

GENTLEMEN, — The committee appointed to proceed to Boston to convey to the citizens of that city your sincere sympathy, and the proffer of material assistance for the relief of sufferers by the fire of the 9th and 10th instant, beg leave to present the following brief report: On Monday following the action of your board, our citizens, at a mass-meeting held in the hall of the Chamber of Commerce, unanimously indorsed your prompt determination to place at the disposal of the

Citizens' Committee of Boston a sum not exceeding a hundred thousand dollars. As, in some sense, this would only be giving back to Boston a small part of the munificent amount so freely given to us in the day of our great need, the citizens took steps for raising by subscription such sum as the necessities of Boston and our ability might warrant; and fifty thousand dollars was pledged at this meeting to this end, and your committee was appointed to represent the feelings and action of our citizens of Boston. We, the undersigned, in the furtherance of these objects, hastened to Boston, and had the honor to convey to the proper committees of that city, and through them to the citizens at large, the sentiments of sympathy and the proffers of aid alike of your board and the people of Chicago. We only perform a sacred as well as pleasant duty to assure you of the grateful appreciation which was on all hands manifested, and the cordial reception of your committee. We had the opportunity of being present at a mass-meeting of citizens at Tremont Temple on the 13th instant, and of listening to the enthusiastic words and responses of warm appreciation of your action, deemed so instant, so generous, and, in view of our condition, probably so unexpected.

On the morning of the 16th instant, the Citizens' Committee, of which Hon. William Gray is chairman, unanimously voted to accept all proffers of material aid: and your committee then stated as the sum they were

authorized to tender a hundred thousand dollars, and felt it was just to all concerned to explain the condition and work of this society, and to assure the people of Boston that we were sincere and hearty in our contributions of aid; at the same time leaving them to determine the measure of their need; and, if it should appear there was no just demand for our contribution, it could be so reported to this society and our citizens, and the funds returned to the subscribers and donors. We took pains to explain the working-methods of our society, and to leave with the Boston Committee our reports and forms. We were assured that the immediate personal distress by reason of the fire was not great, and not beyond the sufficient and prompt resources at the disposal of the committee; that, nevertheless, in view of the large number of persons thrown out of employment during the winter months — not less, probably, than twenty-five thousand, mostly clerks, commercial agents and travellers, and sewing-women — who would require assistance, the action of the committee was deemed expedient and wise. What the final determination of the committee and citizens will be, only time and the necessities of the case can develop.

The estimates of the most careful and judicious persons with whom we had opportunity of conversing placed the number of families burned out at not more than three hundred to four hundred, and the total loss of property at a money value of about eighty million

dollars. In conclusion, your committee beg to assure you that they are not indifferent to the honor of being your representatives and of the city of Chicago on a mission so full of tender memories and helpful mercy, and so creditable to the instant impulse, prompt action, and grateful generosity, of our community.

Respectfully submitted.

LAIRD COLLIER,
H. A. JOHNSON, } *Committee.*
N. K. FAIRBANK,

Other cities, with a sympathy that was worth more than money, sent in their offers of assistance, until the wires were crowded with their despatches.

At a meeting of the New-York Chamber of Commerce, held on Monday, Nov. 11, the same generous feeling prevailed. Among the prominent gentlemen present were Jackson S. Schultz, Henry Grinnell, Royal Phelps, S. B. Chittenden, Russell Sturgis, Henry Clews, S. A. Low, George Opdyke, F. S. Winston, with Hon. William A. Dodge as president. The chairman said the meeting was called by the spontaneous action of the mercantile community to offer sympathy to cheer and aid those called upon to suffer in the city so intimately connected with us in business-relations. After referring to the Chicago fire, and the action then taken by the chairman, they were now called again together with heavy hearts in consequence of the visitation permitted by

Providence to befall the sister-city of Boston. William A. Freese and George Wilson were appointed secretaries. A. A. Low said none were more active in assisting sufferers than the firms now suffering in Boston; and while he had acted as chairman of the Relief Committee of the Chamber, a little more than a year ago, after the Chicago fire, one dry-goods firm in Boston sent him ninety-six thousand dollars in one day, chiefly collected amongst those now the principal sufferers in Boston. The following resolutions were submitted by William M. Freese, seconded by A. A. Low, and unanimously adopted: —

"*Whereas*, Our sister-city, the city of Boston, has just suffered from a calamity that has but one parallel in the history of our country, a large section, embracing within its limits the most costly structures, having been devastated by fire, and their stores of merchandise become a prey to the flames; and

"*Whereas*, By this instantaneous destruction of the most substantial granite buildings, and the burning of their valuable contents, losses of untold magnitude have been inflicted upon a body of merchants who are everywhere known for their energy, their industry, their loyalty, and their benevolence; and *whereas* communities in our day are bound together by mutual ties of interest and affection: —

"*Resolved*, That it becomes this mercantile community promptly to tender to the merchants of Boston,

and to all the sufferers by the devastating fire of yesterday, the expression of deep and hearty sympathy, and to prefer such generous co-operation in the measures of relief as the circumstances of the case and the urgencies of the time demand.

"*Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to consider what measures, if any, it behooves this community to adopt in order to alleviate the primary disabilities that are likely to result from the sudden destruction of the property, of books and papers, of hundreds of mercantile firms."

The chairman said, "Whatever we may do in the way of sympathy or aid will be better done, when it is done, promptly. What is wanted to cheer the parties who are in such distress and affliction? Many of us remember our own feelings during the terrific fires of 1835 and 1845. I remember the entire cold winter night of 1835; and, soon after daybreak, I went into Pearl Street, near Wall, and there I saw our old and now venerable fellow-citizen, James Lee, with twenty Irishmen, digging for his safe. He was covered with soot and dirt. I offered my hand and my sympathy; and, turning around, with his characteristic energy he said, 'Thank God, Dodge, my wife and children live! This hand has supported them always; and, thank God! it can support them still.' (Applause.) It is sympathy to cheer and encourage that men require under such difficulties. There are in Boston a class of sufferers, the

employés in the large establishments, thrown out of employment; and there is a small portion inhabited by the poorer classes also destroyed: but, with the merchants, what is needed is not so much sympathy as aid." The chairman then went on to state how, by the means of extended papers, the Boston merchants helped those of New York when fires occurred here, and suggested the same kind of help, through bankers and others here, by cheering the hearts of those people, and showing a little forbearance all round. The calamity could be bridged over, and not be so great as it appears to be. A collection for funds throughout the country would not be needed as during the Chicago fire; and a small committee would be sufficient.

The resolutions were adopted; and, on motion of Henry Clews, the chairman was asked to name the committee.

The following were named as such committee: A. A. Low, F. S. Winston, William H. Gray, Horace B. Claflin, George Opdyke, J. Pierrepont Morgan, S. D. Babcock, Jarvis Slade, Jacob Wendell, S. B. Chittenden, and Morton E. Sanford, with Hon. William E. Dodge as chairman.

The Common Council of Brooklyn, N.Y., offered to appropriate a hundred thousand dollars, if Boston needed as much; and many private individuals sent their checks for large sums.

At St. Louis there was held a very large meeting of the

wealthy merchants; and a great desire was exhibited to send Boston all she needed. At that time the news of the fire was so unreliable, and so much exaggerated, that it was supposed that thousands of people were homeless.

Pittsburg, Cincinnati, Worcester, Milwaukie, Lowell, Rochester, Providence, Newark, Montreal, Washington, Hudson, Saginaw, Portland, Newburyport, Baltimore, Somerville, Lynn, Salem, and many other cities, appointed committees for the purpose of raising funds by subscription; and the readiness everywhere displayed "to divide with unfortunate Boston" was such as to awaken tearful emotion. Surely this republic is founded in brotherly love; and for this reason it may be that God has so bountifully blessed it.

But America was not alone; for old Boston in England, after which this stricken city was named, sent her kind words, and raised a considerable amount of money. London and Liverpool, and even Paris, sent their contributions; and as a worthy divine said, "It does seem, in a time like this, as if all the world loved us."

Gen. Kilpatrick lectured in New York, Madame Rudersdorff sang in Gloucester, Mr. Froude, the great historian, gave a course of lectures in Boston, Father Tom Burke of Ireland lectured in the Boston Theatre, the proceeds of which were given in aid of the sufferers by the fire. The dramatic companies of a score of cities gave entertainments for the benefit of Boston. Hun-

dreds of individuals sent in their gifts; and from Calais, Me., to Los Angeles, Cal., there were regrets, sighings, tears, giving.

> "Great thoughts, great feelings, came to them
> Like instincts, — unawares."

Some of these acts of generosity will be found recorded in the chapter upon "Scenes and Incidents."

CHAPTER XII.

HELPING OURSELVES.

THERE is no other section of Boston, of the same size, which could have been destroyed, that would have been covered with the ruins of so much wealth. Neither is there another section, containing sixty acres, the destruction of which would not have rendered homeless many thousand people. There were many, far too many, whose homes were consumed, and whose destitution was most pitiful; but the number of dwellings seems comparatively few when we consider the extent of the fire and the long list of buildings destroyed. Less than a hundred dwellings, and less than a thousand people rendered homeless, are reported in official schedules. But in many cases the loss was much greater to those whose houses and homes were saved than it was to some whose dwellings are now in ashes. Thousands could have spared the place where they ate and slept, but could not live without help when the manufactories and warehouses in which

they were employed had gone out of existence. Hence the burning of one clothing-establishment might cause more actual suffering than did the downfall of all those dwelling-houses.

There were destitution, hunger, and even nakedness. The working-men and working-girls did need much assistance. Starvation and cold stood in their pathways, and bitter poverty compelled them to ask for food and work.

Boston was proud. She could not forget that here originated the charitable enterprises of America. She remembered how the eyes of all were turned upon her again, as they so often have been in civil and military strife, to see what *she* would do in order that they might follow her example. Boston was rich. With her capital she has covered the land with railroads, blocked the great rivers with factories, and helped new States into a healthy, financial life. She had lost much; but what was that compared with the riches which she had left?

Appreciating to the fullest extent the great kindness of such as desired to aid them, the people of Boston did not feel as if they could conscientiously relinquish the privilege of caring for their own poor; and while the fire was but half spent, and before the people of other cities began to realize what an appalling disaster had visited us, a large number of the most venerable and respectable citizens of the burning city met in the City

Hall to provide organized means of relief for such as were in need. Men there were, then, who, with generous hearts and widespread palms, were eager to do, and to give to any in poverty, yet who, as the fire rushed on, were themselves rendered penniless; and the closing day saw poverty stalking in at their mansions in a garb as horrid as ever it had exhibited to the lowest cottager.

But there were thousands whose wealth was still untouched, and thousands who had lost much, who were eager to give; and the good work went on. We have tried, with all the means and all the time at our command, to make a record of their proceedings for the perusal of future generations, which shall be a true exhibit of the men and their labors.

At a meeting held on Sunday, while the fire was still raging, the following General Relief Committee was appointed: —

William Gaston,
William Claflin,
Henry Walker,
Josiah G. Abbott,
Samuel C. Cobb,
John B. Schlessenger,
James Little,
Samuel D. Warren,
William Gray,
Otis Norcross,
Alexander H. Rice,
J. Fred. Paul,
Hamilton A. Hill,
John H. Thorndike,
Martin Brimmer,
Jerome Jones,
James H. Freeland,
Edward Sands,
Charles H. Allen,
James H. Danforth,
Patrick Donahoe,
H. G. Crowell,

Edward S. Tobey,	Joseph H. Chadwick,
Eben D. Jordan,	Henry L. Pierce,
Josiah Quincy,	William Pope,
William L. Burt,	N. J. Bradlee,
Avery Plummer,	Franklin Williams,
James H. Beal,	N. B. Shurtleff,
George O. Carpenter,	Rev. William B. Wright,
William B. Spooner,	Samuel Hooper,
Joseph M. Wightman,	Edward W. Kinsley,
George C. Richardson,	Martin Griffin,
Rev. J. D. Fulton,	Nathan Matthews,
Robert Johnson,	Arthur Cheney,
F. W. Lincoln,	Percival L. Everett,
Thomas Russell,	George B. Faunce,
Augustus Parker,	Samuel H. Gookin,
Henry L. Hallett,	Abram Firth,
George Lewis,	Sebastian B. Schlessenger,

Gen. Cunningham.

Mr. William Gray was elected chairman (than whom none greater or more noble ever drew breath), Mr. Franklin Williams secretary, and Mr. Otis Norcross treasurer. All were men distinguished as much by their good deeds as by their great ones.

A sub-committee to "draw up a plan of action, and report the next day," was composed of Mr. Gray, Mr. Claflin, Mr. Norcross, Mr. Abbott, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Crowell, and Mr. Hallett.

A "bureau of relief" was appointed, consisting of A. H. Rice, F. W. Lincoln, Samuel C. Cobb, Henry L. Pierce, and Joseph H. Chadwick.

On Monday, Nov. 11, at a meeting of the General Committee, the following sub-committees were also appointed: 1. To urge the General Government to enlarge the post-office site, —William Gaston, William L. Burt, and Edward S. Tobey. 2. To urge our senators and representatives to procure the passage of a law to remit the duties on building-materials, — Josiah Quincy, Thomas Russell, James L. Little. 3. To ask the governor to call a special session of the legislature, — Avery Plummer, William Gray, Martin Brimmer, William B. Spooner, William Claflin, and Samuel B. Spooner. 4. To call a public meeting of the citizens, — William Gaston, Hamilton A. Hill, Augustus Parker, George O. Carpenter, Thomas Russell, and Rev. J. D. Fulton.

The following gentlemen were appointed a finance committee: William Gray, George C. Richardson, Samuel C. Cobb, Avery Plummer, Martin Brimmer, and Otis Norcross, *ex officio*.

The following committee was appointed to secure work for, and aid, such women as might have been deprived of employment by the fire: —

Mrs. Harrison Gray Otis,
Mrs. William Claflin,
Mrs. William Gaston,
Mrs. Samuel D. Warren,
Mrs. Augustus Hemmenway,
Mrs. William Endicott, jun.,
L. P. Rowland,
Miss Frances S. Gray,
Miss Laura Norcross,
Henry G. Crowell,
Martin Brimmer,
Rev. Dr. Rufus Ellis,
William H. Baldwin,
Mrs. C. G. Loring,

Mrs. Thomas J. Homer,
Mrs. William E. Smith (Boston Highlands),
Mrs. J. G. Abbott,
Mrs. Walter Baker (Dorchester),
Mrs. Samuel T. Hooper,
Mrs. Isaac Fenno,
Mrs. O. Goodwin,
Miss Abby W. May,
Mrs. C. W. Freeland,
Mrs. G. R. Russell,
Isaac Thacher,
Rev. John Parkman,
Rev. G. L. Chaney,
Rev. William B. Wright.

Subsequently the General Relief Committee was made a permanent organization, and the following names added to the previous membership: —

W. F. Robinson,
Dudley Williams,
G. F. Sanderson,
J. K. Rogers,
Stephen R. Niles,
Frederick U. Tracey,
John N. Clifford,
Cyrus Wakefield,
Peter Brigham,
James D. W. Braman,
Frank A. Osborn,
Edward Page,
Edward Atkinson,
J. Lockwood,
Harvey D. Parker,
Lewis Rice,
Henry Smith,
J. P. Barnard,
J. R. Banister,
William Atherton,
Samuel D. Crane,
Phineas Pierce,
J. D. Morton,
L. A. Shattuck,
J. A. Coe,
B. R. Curtis,
Sidney Bartlett,
George T. Bigelow,
B. F. Thomas,
S. D. Nickerson,
Arioch Wentworth,
Alvah L. Haskell,
Henry C. Morse,
A. A. Burrage,
Andrew J. Hall,
John A. Nowell,
Harrison Loring,
E. A. White,

John O. Poor,
Rev. James A. Healey,
A. H. Batcheller,
Thomas Gaffield,
F. L. Bullard,
John B. Taft,
John A. Lowell,
Sigourney Bird,
John Botume, jun.,
Dexter H. Follett,
Michael Doherty,
Josiah Dunham,
Newell A. Thompson,
Sidney A. Stetson,
Henry S. Washburne,
W. J. McPherson,
S. O. Aborn,
Charles L. Thayer,
Harvey Jewell,
Richard Briggs,
Joseph W. Woods,
Isaac Fenno,
John C. Howe,
William W. Greenough,
W. D. Forbes,
D. W. Richards,
L. Miles Standish,
Charles E. Wiggin,
Nehemiah Gibson,
John Taylor,
George E. Fowle,
Robert C. Billings,
George Young,
Jonathan Flint,
E. W. Converse,
A. A. Folsom,
W. C. Ulman,
Charles J. Hayden,
James R. Osgood,
N. C. Nash,
J. J. McNutt,
Charles A. Smith,
Horace Weston,
Samuel Talbot, jun.,
Charles E. Folsom,
William P. Howard,
T. C. Stearns,
Henry Crocker,
D. A. Dunbar,
Albert Morse,
George E. Hersey,
Rev. J. H. Means,
Joshua B. Fiske,
Charles E. Powers,
Newton Talbot,
Albert C. Pond,
Col. W. V. Hutchings,
J. H. Gray,
E. C. Drew,
Abel B. Munroe,
R. E. Dennison,
R. H. Stearns,
George P. Baldwin,
Asahel S. Wheeler,

Bradley N. Cummings,	Moses Fairbanks,
John F. Mills,	L. L. Willcutt,
T. Albert Taylor,	P. Adams Ames,
George P. Jepson,	J. P. Squires,
William C. Ireland,	George P. Sanger,
W. Sayward,	Barney Corey,
Benjamin E. Cole,	William Read,
James E. Bayley,	R. M. Field,
Matthew Cox,	Silas S. Pierce,
Foster Pierce,	Joel Goldthwaite,
Albert J. Wright,	George F. Williams,
George D. Fenno,	John Demeritt,
Moses Kimball,	George L. Thayer,
Benjamin W. Thayer,	Charles V. Poor,
Walter Hastings,	O. D. Witherell,
Jeremiah Abbott,	Otis Shepard,
Frank Bush,	Alanson Bigelow,
Henry N. Sawyer,	J. M. Kimball,

Matthew Bolles.

The committee of seven, and the chairmen of the several permanent committees, were constituted an executive committee; the permanent committees being, 1. Bureau of Relief; 2. Employment for *Women;* 3. Employment for *Men.*

William Gray,	Henry L. Hallett,
William Claflin,	Henry G. Crowell,
Otis Norcross,	Alexander H. Rice,
Josiah G. Abbott,	Mrs. William Claflin,
George C. Richardson,	Samuel D. Warren.

A committee was also appointed to prepare a list of gentlemen, comprising all interests and trades, to circulate papers among the citizens to procure pecuniary aid and relief: —

Thomas Gaffield,
Thomas Russell,
Charles E. Wiggin,
Jerome Jones,
George B. Faunce,
Bradley N. Cummings.

And they reported the next day as follows: —

Abraham Avery,
Elisha Atkins,
Alvin Adams,
Stillman B. Allen,
Dudley H. Bayley,
Charles J. Bishop,
S. C. Bixby,
Albert Bowker,
M. M. Ballou,
G. F. Brown,
George Baty Blake,
N. J. Bradlee,
Benjamin Bradlee,
Richard Briggs,
W. H. Baldwin,
A. Sigourney Bird,
N. W. Bumstead,
Alanson Bigelow,
John Botume, jun.,
William Bliss,
Job F. Bailey,
Harvey Jewell,
Henry P. Kidder,
Moses Kimball,
George P. King,
W. H. Kinsman,
M. P. Kennard,
W. H. Learnard, jun.,
Harrison Loring,
George Lewis,
W. K. Lewis,
H. F. Lambert,
S. H. Loring,
C. J. Morrill,
N. P. Mann,
John J. May,
Rev. W. H. H. Murray,
Moses Mellen,
Nathan Matthews,
H. E. Maynard,
Henry Mayo,
T. Metcalf,

Rev. W. H. Cudworth,
J. H. Chadwick,
W. W. Clapp,
John Cummings,
J. B. Crocker, jun.,
John Collamore,
A. N. Cook,
W. J. Cutler,
Arthur Cheney,
Henry Callendar,
David H. Coolidge,
George Derby,
Oliver Ditson,
E. H. Dunn,
Thomas Dana, 2d,
Levi Doolittle,
W. J. Endicott, jun.,
F. F. Emery,
Charles E. Folsom,
Dexter H. Follett,
Albert Fearing,
J. M. Finotti,
Sewell H. Fessenden,
J. V. Fletcher,
R. M. Field,
C. W. Freeland,
Abram French,
R. O. Fuller,
Abram Firth,
E. Farnsworth,
R. S. Frost,
J. M. Fiske,
Alfred Grant,
S. J. Mead,
Charles Marsh,
S. T. Manson,
George H. Munroe,
Robert Morris,
Leopold Morse,
William Merritt,
W. R. Norcross,
H. D. Parker,
William Parkman,
William L. Pennell,
J. F. Paul,
H. L. Pierce,
William Pope,
Edward Page,
A. C. Pond,
E. F. Pratt,
W. H. Roundy,
Nathan Robbins,
William G. Russell,
E. H. Sampson,
Franklin Snow,
M. D. Spaulding,
B. F. Stevens,
J. A. Stone,
J. B. Smith,
Joseph Sawyer,
C. J. Spenceley,
A. G. Stimson,
O. F. Taylor,
J. C. Tyler,
Dr. I. S. Talbot,
John Taylor,

W. W. Gannett,
Curtis Guild,
Silas Gurney,
C. W. Galloupe,
C. L. Haley,
H. Harris,
Rev. E. E. Hale,
H. A. Hill,
Rev. J. A. Healey,
John S. Hooper,
Franklin Haven, jun.,
W. L. Horton,
R. W. Hooper,
Robert Johnson,
Eben Tourjée,
J. H. Thorndike,
A. B. Underwood,
C. O. Whitmore,
J. M. S. Williams,
Roland Worthington,
Henry S. Washburn,
Charles W. Wilder,
William Whiting,
Rev. William B. Wright,
Cyrus Wakefield,
Ralph Warner,
Charles Woodbury,
Andrew J. Hall.

A committee, consisting of Josiah G. Abbott, Benjamin R. Curtis, Sidney Bartlett, George T. Bigelow, and B. F. Thomas, was appointed to confer with the city solicitor and the other legal advisers of the city in reference to such acts as it may be desirable to ask from the legislature of the State at the approaching extra session.

Hon. Samuel Hooper, Alexander H. Rice, and Thomas Russell, were appointed a committee to petition the Secretary of the Navy for a larger appropriation for the Charlestown Navy Yard, in order that employment might be given a larger number of destitute men.

The General Committee appointed the following committee to aid *men* in procuring employment: Samuel D. Warren, George O. Carpenter, Martin Griffin, Wil-

liam Endicott, jun., Abram Firth, J. D. Fulton, Samuel H. Gookin.

A committee of five was appointed to organize a bureau of relief, with headquarters in the Charity-Bureau building, Chardon Street. The committee consisted of Hon. A. H. Rice, Hon. Frederick W. Lincoln, Mr. S. C. Cobb, Mr. H. L. Pierce, and Mr. Joseph H. Chadwick.

We feel constrained to insert here, just as it appeared in "The Boston Post," a report of one of the meetings of the Relief Committee; for it will bring more vividly to mind the scene, the people, and the way assistance was offered, than any thing else could do: —

"Another meeting of the General Relief Committee was held yesterday morning at City Hall; Hon. William Gray, the chairman, presiding. Messrs. Shippen, Marcy, and Adams, of the Relief Committee from Philadelphia, and the Mayor of Lowell, were present by invitation. The chairman spoke of the aid which had been proffered from various cities, and said, that, at the time their telegrams were received, immediate answers were deemed necessary; and the mayor had formed a despatch, which was approved by the entire committee, and sent to the Mayors of Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, Chicago, Alleghany City, Providence, and the President of the New-York Chamber of Commerce, that their assistance would be gratefully received. At present, however, while he had no foolish pride against

receiving aid from other cities, he was of the opinion that Boston was able to relieve all suffering and need; and it would be perhaps dishonorable to accept the offers so freely made. He therefore offered a resolution, that while profoundly grateful for the aid tendered, and with entire readiness and thanksgiving to accept the same if circumstances render it necessary, it gives them unalloyed pleasure to say, that, while the losses have been great, Providence has so favored them, that the assistance so freely proffered will not be required.

"This was seconded by Hon. Thomas Russell.

"Mr. Nathan Matthews did not think they were prepared to send such a response. The merchants could not afford to relieve the sufferers; and they would certainly need help.

"Rev. William B. Wright knew there were many young men and women who were in need of help; and he thought there was an imperative demand for an immediate fund.

"Hon. Josiah Quincy agreed that it was too early to refuse aid, and moved to lay the resolution on the table.

"Mayor Gaston said that common courtesy demanded a definite answer, and he hoped one would be given. He thought that nearly every one failed to appreciate the magnitude of the loss, not only of the wealthy, but of the poor. The charity of the city bestowed through the usual channels would not be sought; nor would

private charity extend beyond a limited extent. The people who had suffered must be sought out and assisted; and the question was, if they should interfere, and refuse the aid proffered them. A certain degree of pride was commendable; but in an emergency like the present, unless a fund could be guaranteed to meet the wants of the sufferers, he did not think it right to reject those offers: they should rather be gratefully accepted. These remarks were applauded, and the resolution tabled.

"Mr. Matthews then offered the following: —

"'*Resolved*, That the committee, in behalf of the citizens of Boston, return most sincere thanks to their fellow-citizens in all parts of the Union for the warm expressions of sympathy which they have tendered at this time of calamity, and for the friendly offers of pecuniary aid which they have made; and that these friendly offers be, and they are hereby, gratefully accepted.'

"Mr. P. A. Collins was not sure that employment would be so speedily furnished as some had hoped. He thought the resolution should be tabled till it was known what was needed. A motion to this effect was made by Col. Henry Walker.

"Mayor Gaston said delay meant a defeat of the resolution. There were already a thousand persons in the parish of Father Healey who were suffering from the fire.

"Rev. Robert Laird Collier said the fifty thousand

dollars appropriated by the Relief and Aid Committee of Chicago could be returned; but the fifty thousand dollars raised by the citizens in thirty minutes could not be so easily disposed of. When spring-time came, it would be soon enough to refuse the offering, if it were not needed.

"Mr. Shippen of Philadelphia said, that, unless Boston accepted their aid, Philadelphia could not receive their assistance in a similar emergency. He did not want kind hearts repulsed by wet blankets, and hoped their aid would be accepted.

"Mr. William B. Spooner said the gifts should be received with gratitude, and immediately applied to the benefit of the sufferers.

"The resolution of Mr. Matthews was then unanimously adopted with applause; and Father Healey was added to the General Committee.

"Mr. Gray, the chairman, said he had received from Mrs. Harrison Gray Otis five hundred dollars; from New Bedford two thousand dollars; from Mr. Dana, of the firm of Morgan Brothers, London, five thousand dollars; from S. A. Stetson, from the surplus of the Odd Fellows' Fund, a thousand dollars.

"Hon. E. S. Tobey said the Boston Young Men's Christian Association had ten thousand dollars on hand; and Mr. Gray said the Boston Committee had seventy-five thousand dollars yet remaining of the Chicago Relief Fund.

"A despatch from the Secretary of the Navy was read, which said that further discharge from the construction department of the Navy Yard would be delayed till further orders.

"A letter from the Secretary of the Treasury was received, stating that there was no doubt that Congress would afford relief to those importers who had stock in bond, and were injured by the fire."

Thus it will be seen, that with wisdom, prudence, and Christian charity, great preparations were made to succor the deserving poor. In this work the committee soon found that their greatest task would be in providing for the destitute sewing-girls, who could be counted by the thousand.

Miss Jennie Collins, who has devoted her whole life to the welfare of the sewing-girls, and who, although sometimes misguided, and at others too enthusiastic, has, nevertheless, done a great work in her independent way, was a most earnest worker in that time of trial; and the rooms she kept open as a public resort for working-women were crowded with seekers after employment. Be it said to their honor, they desired work, and not charity. The following statement was published, as given by Miss Collins, the day after the fire, and while the public mind was eagerly seeking after information: —

"According to her estimate, about thirty thousand women and girls were thrown out of employment by

the great fire. Of these, eighteen thousand are tailoresses; three thousand more are employed making shoes, slippers, heels, shawl-straps, in leather-stitching, and in all branches of the leather-trade. The remaining nine thousand were employed in the various trades in the following list, from fifty to six hundred in each: Waiters in restaurants, type-setting, making paper boxes, making paper collars, saleswomen (there are only four hundred in the entire city), cloak-making (no dress-makers or milliners were burned out), hoop-skirt and corset making, furriers, rubber-work, press-feeders, drawing on glass, book-keeping, rosette and necktie making, hair-work, jute and switches, quilting, machine-sewing, finishing in tailor-shops, hat and cap making, cigar-making, carpet and upholstering, pattern-making, bonnet-frame making, worsted knitting, packing, glass and crockery, confectioners, toy-making, doll-dressing (this trade employs two hundred girls sixteen weeks each year), drugs and medicines, grave-clothing, theatrical costuming, designing, ladies' furnishing, embroidering, hair-net work, artificial flowers, lithographing and photographing, frame-gilding, ruffling and fluting, elastic-making, copying and proof-reading, ladies' hose-sewing, cloud and nubia making, bugle-trimming, fringe-making, glove-making, tassel-making, crocheting, shirt-making, bookbinding, umbrella and parasol making, preserving flowers, artificial limbs, feather-curlers, straw-sewers, braid-winding, lace-making, carriage-trimming, chair-seating, feather-duster mak-

ing, needle-making, crape-folding, wax-work, suspender-making, pickling, silver burnishing, and as errand-girls. Besides these, there are about as many more sub-divisions of labor, the names of which would be unintelligible to the uninitiated.

"It appears, then, that while a few women are pining for their rights to the pulpit, the bar, the scalpel, and the editorial paste-pot, thirty thousand women in Boston enjoy the right to labor in a hundred and fifty trades, and many of them enjoy the right to good wages."

The Committee for the Relief of Working-women had their headquarters under the Park-street Church; and plenty of work they found to do. Under the leadership of Mrs. William Claflin, they worked until they could not stand, talked until they were hoarse, studied the circumstances, and computed wages and board, until their heads were dizzy in mental exhaustion. Here, again, we must append another report from the morning press of that week: —

"Money being the one great need of women who are out of employment, it is gratifying to inform them that there is enough in the relief fund to meet all exigencies. This money, as we understand it, belongs to people who have been thrown out of employment. It is in no sense a charity that the applicants accept in taking money from the hands of the Relief Committee. They are simply acting in the place of their former employers, and paying them money that

is as much their own as if they had worked for it with the needle, the sewing-machine, or any other implement of industry. At present, the headquarters of relief for working-women are in the basement of Park-street Church, where Mrs. William Claflin and her corps of noble-hearted women and other co-workers are to be found to attend to all who may call upon them. No girl or woman who has been thrown out of employment need be ashamed to visit these headquarters. There is no red-tape there, or any thing else to humble the pride of the most proud-spirited girl in Boston; and, as a beautiful compliment to the girls who have already called and been assisted, we add Mrs. Claflin's own words: 'It is a downright blessing to be permitted to see the respectable and brave spirit manifested by these working girls and women.' Every caller is treated with the utmost politeness; and not for one moment, even, is a girl allowed to feel that she is asking for any thing, or that she is to receive any thing, other than what of right is her own. The applicant simply tells where she has been employed, what wages she has been able to earn, how many are dependent on her for support, and whether she boards, or lives at home; and then, not being afraid that any respectable girl will impose upon them, the relief comes, and they get their money as freely as from the hands of their employers. What is needed is given; and, this gone, they can come for more. Nearly two hundred girls were paid off yesterday and

Tuesday afternoon, each girl receiving from two to five dollars *in money*, according to her needs; no girl being willing to receive more than she actually needs to get along with.

"In this connection Mrs. Claflin desired us to state, in order to relieve the labors of the committee, and also to more readily assist the girls, that properly-vouched-for board-bills, presented by landlords or landladies where girls out of employment are stopping, will be paid by the committee. Women who have been accustomed to board themselves in their rooms will receive checks for meals by applying for them at these headquarters; and, as fast as their labors can be systematized, other arrangements will be made to extend and simplify the work of providing for these women. In addition to this, work will be furnished the girls as fast as possible; and people who can give employment to any number of girls are particularly requested to so inform this committee. Where it is practicable to do so, girls are requested to bring certificates from their late employers, stating that they are out of employment," &c.

For days and weeks after the great disaster, the various headquarters of relief committees were crowded with anxious seekers after employment and temporary relief. The doorways were sometimes so crowded, and the offices so full, that a ticket-system had to be adopted, by which only a certain number could be admitted at once. The overseers of the poor in the Chardon-

street building, the Woman's Relief Office at the Park-street Church, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Young Men's Christian Union, City Hall, and "Boffin's Bower," heard tales of distress and of patient toil at which Boston was astonished.

But the patience, cheerfulness, and courage of the unfortunate ones was something marvellous. No weeping anywhere after the first day, except for the dead. It was given the citizens of the "Athens of America" once, at least, to

> "Know how sublime a thing it is
> To suffer and be strong."

Firms, corporations, men, women, children, all gave their share toward the funds for relief; and the whole community was purified, refined, and ennobled by that outburst of charity.

> "The steel must pass through fire ere it can yield
> Fit instruments for mighty hands to wield."

The same spirit which prompted the people to decline much proffered aid, also led them to protest against any impolitic national movements in favor of individual Boston which might be an injury to the whole country. So, when some benevolent, unwise men advocated the issue of more currency to relieve the stringency of the Boston money-market, Mr. Gray, on behalf of the committee, sent a protest to the Secretary

of the Treasury at Washington, saying that Boston was not so much in need as to demand such an extraordinary proceeding. When Mr. Gray's telegram became known in Washington, the following despatch was sent to Boston, among others, for the encouragement of the people : —

UNITED-STATES COAST-SURVEY OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, Nov. 14, 1872.

MY DEAR GRAY, — Your telegraphic despatch is a glorious one ; and the way in which it is received here makes the Boston man feel proud of his city. With what a noble spirit Boston has met her calamity ! Hereafter the faith in her will be tenfold greater than before ; and out of her ashes will arise a reputation which will transcend in value even the immense loss which she has suffered. Your sincere friend,

BENJAMIN PIERCE.

Hon. WILLIAM GRAY.

There are many things which are of interest in connection with this subject which will be found in a subsequent chapter : and all it behooves us to say in this place is, that if there was any suffering in the city on account of the fire, and after the first day, it was unknown to the committee ; for every known one, great and small, was attended with much care ; and, while there were many impostors, all were fed and clothed, in order that none should by any chance be missed who deserved assistance. Out of the fire " came forth sweetness " and rest and gratitude and love.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FIRE-DEPARTMENT.

IN time of fire, the most important organization in the city government, as well as the one having the highest authority, is the fire-department. To that men naturally look for safety; and, in order that it may not be trammelled by too much red-tape ceremony, the law gives its chief a temporary lease of the supreme authority. We have already spoken of the great confidence which the people had in the sagacity and strength of its firemen, and the sacrifice they had made before it was realized that the fire was master.

Boston has been so free from fires since the organization of the fire-department in its present form, that we naturally felt as if it would always be so, and that, at last, science and wise legislation had found a sure preventive of great fires. The men were selected with care; the steam fire-engines were of the latest, best pattern and workmanship; hooks, ladders, hose-carriages, hose, nozzles, water-pipes, hydrants, and scaling-

apparatus, all were supposed to be as nearly in a perfect condition as the money and genius of man could make them.

In this were made several mistakes. First, It is not for man to be so wise, that none of the interminable ways of Providence shall take him by surprise. Man cannot provide for *all* the contingencies and accidents of the future; and no fire-department, unless it be composed of prophets, can be so well fortified against unexpected and novel phases of burning as to meet with success all encroachments of the flames. Second, *There was not an ample supply of water.* In 1869, the Board of Engineers, according to their published report, warned the city against the danger of a fire in the very locality where this began, and recommended the construction of reservoirs in that vicinity to draw from in case of a great conflagration. But it seems that the request of the fire-department was unheeded: consequently there were more engines than water; and some had to remain idle, or go to unimportant points. The water-pipes were too small to supply the draught of more than two engines.

Third, There were no horses to draw the engines and hose-carriages to the fire; all having been stricken with the prevalent "horse-disease." Upon this matter there existed a great difference of opinion; and while the majority claimed that the absence of horses did not retard the progress of the engines, and that streams

were set upon the fire as quick as they could have been if the propelling power had been supplied by horses instead of men, yet some there were, whose opinions were worthy of respect, who stated that the absence of horses made fatal delays. However that may be, it is a matter of history that the carriage of Hose No. 7 was in the street by the burning building before the officer had time to open the signal-box and sound the alarm; and that Steamer No. 7 was "fired up," and turned the corner by the fire, before the last bell of the first alarm was struck. The officers of Steamer No. 7 ("The T. C. Amory") were Daniel T. Marden, foreman; Charles Riley, engine-man; Henry J. Adams, fireman; and George W. Stoddard, driver.

Immediately after No. 7 came No. 4 ("The Barnicoat"), with Joseph Pierce, foreman; Dexter R. Deering, engine-man; William T. Cheswell, fireman; and Russell White, driver. There can be no doubt but that the disposition of these two engines was the very best that could have been made; and that the wisdom shown by the foreman did prevent the spread of the flames to the southward, in which direction the wind was strongly blowing. Who could have believed that it would have run with such speed against the wind? These engines took all the water from the pipe; and the others, as they arrived, were sent to different and more inconvenient points by Chief Engineer Damrell, who early arrived on the ground. He made the best arrange-

ments he could for obtaining sufficient water; but greater floods were needed than the Cochituate took to Summer Street or into that vicinity.

They came with the speed of steam, — engines, carriages, and men. From the North End, from the West End, from East Boston, from the South End, from South Boston, from the Highlands, from every street almost, there came engines or implements for the extinguishment of fire.

The alarm was sounded from Box 52, on Summer Street, five times, — viz., at 7.21 o'clock, P.M., at 7.29, at 7.34, at 7.45, and at 8, — by which time the connections were consuming; and the next alarm, at 8.17, came from Box 123. When it was found, at 8.24, that a monster of such hideous and Cyclopean proportions was to be fought, Box 123 sent out the general alarm; and at 10.09 another call for help came from the bells striking Box 48.

It was before the last general alarm in the city when Chief Engineer Damrell was satisfied that his department could not cope with the flames; and, with a creditable forethought, he had the presence of mind to send for help to other cities, and at the same time to carry the responsibilities and care of his own immense department with careful calculation.

Then, by every avenue which leads to Boston, came the engines, carriages, and ladder-wagons of the suburban cities, some drawn by horses, others by racing

squads of excited men, rattling, roaring, puffing, yelling along, like divisions of artillery rushing on to certain victory.

"George H. Foster," Steamer No. 1, and Hose 3, of Somerville; Steamers Nos. 2, 3, and 4, of Cambridge; "Howard," Steamer No. 1, and two Navy-Yard engines, with Hose Companies Nos. 1, 3, and 4, of Charlestown; Steamers Nos. 1 and 2 of Newton; "Col. Gould," Steamer No. 1, of Stoneham; the "Gov. Lincoln" and "A. B. Lovell" of Worcester; No. 1 from Natick, with others from Watertown township, Watertown United-States Arsenal, Waltham, Lynn (2), Salem (2), Hyde Park, Fall River, Wakefield, Reading, Brookline (hose, hook-and-ladder, and hand-engine), Brighton (hose), Lawrence, Taunton, Haverhill, New Bedford, Newburyport, West Roxbury, Chelsea (2), and several other places, came rushing into the city; which, with the twenty-two engines of the Boston department, would seem enough to drown the whole district.

But many of the engines from the suburbs had hose too large or too small; the couplings were of the wrong make to fit the city hydrants, or some other part of their apparatus was unfit for use in the city; and much delay and annoyance were the result. The Wakefield hand-engine was drawn in by a hardy and noble set of fellows a distance of twelve miles, because there were neither horses nor steam-conveyance to be had.

Other States sent in their men and steamers, includ-

ing engines from Newport and Providence, R.I., New Haven and Norwich (2), Conn., Manchester (2) and Portsmouth, N.H., and Biddeford, Me. Many places sent in offers of assistance; and would have sent their fire-departments, had they not been told that the city contained, at the time they telegraphed, all that could work to advantage. Others were present of whom no record was made, because of the excitement and press of other duties on the fire-department, but who came and went with a quiet modesty as impressive and creditable as were their zeal and their hard labor while they remained.

It was one of the severest conflicts in the history of firemen. There were deeds as brave, and acts as self-sacrificing, as the battle-field or the ditches of a siege could furnish, — real, true heroism, genuine daring, cool intrepidity. They stood on dangerous places; they faced the fire until it scorched them to a blister; they clambered into windows and along projections, risking their lives to save the property of others; they dashed into smoke-filled halls and stairways, walked through flames, and stood firm at their post, when sparks and steam and heat seared them with unceasing torture.

Some fell from dizzy heights, and were broken and torn; some were run over by the sudden shifting of apparatus; while some, alas! went down, down, into billows of fire, and mingled their ashes with the dust of ruined temples; and others were buried in the crushing

piles of broken timber and masonry, there to hear the surging of the coming tide, and the shouts of friends whose efforts to uncover them were unavailing, and at last slowly and surely to die the awful death of fire.

The heart beats too quick, the tears are too thick, and the soul sends its shudders through the frame too solemnly, to write calmly. The pen quivers, and is slow to answer the demand of the intellect, when we recall that dreadful scene and those piercing cries.

The great difficulty which the firemen met with in their combats was in getting the streams of water as high as the tops of the buildings. The roofs were nearly all of the Mansard pattern; which, while they are attractive in an æsthetic way, are but tinder-boxes of pine and tar in time of fire. Against these combustible roofs, set up out of reach, Chief Damrell had often protested: but men do not think of these things before a disaster as they do in the days which follow it; and hence they kept the wooden roofs, and shared in the conflagration which those combustible piles drew into their warehouses. No sooner was the fire under headway than the currents set in motion in the atmosphere began to whisk and whistle around the upper stories, completely cutting off the water before it reached them, sending off in spray or steam the largest and the most powerful streams. It seemed like a work against fate.

As the conflagration swept onward, crossing street

after street in its march, it was decided to blow up all the buildings on Milk Street on the south side from Devonshire Street, to and through Morton Place, as many of the buildings in this locality were of a very combustible nature, and would endanger the entire northern section of the city. This was between twelve and one o'clock on Sunday morning: but a sufficient quantity of powder could not be obtained in this city at that time; and Alderman Jenks despatched a police-officer to the Navy Yard with a request to Commodore Parrott to furnish a quantity of that article. With commendable promptness, the commodore ordered five one-hundred-pound kegs of powder to be placed in a hack; and the officer soon reported back, when the blowing-up of buildings on Washington, Devonshire, and Water Streets, was commenced. To make the corner of Milk and Washington Streets the objective point in the ravages of the fire northward, every effort was made, and fortunately proved successful. Then, to stop its crossing State Street, and sweeping the section of the city lying beyond that point, a number of buildings were mined on the south side of that street and on Devonshire Street, between Water and State Streets; but, before these extreme measures were required, the dreaded element was under control, and all further danger avoided.

In a report of an interview with Chief Engineer Damrell, we find the following reference to the use of powder: —

"At no time did Mr. Damrell or his associates apprehend that the fire would cross Washington Street from Summer to Milk Streets; and, to prevent such a catastrophe, a considerable number of engines were massed along that part of Washington Street. The chief regrets that he yielded to the pressing demands of prominent citizens in the blowing-up of buildings, as the course pursued in consequence of their urgent entreaties, instead of arresting the conflagration, as they supposed would be the case, had the effect to shatter the windows in adjacent warehouses filled with goods, and furnished additional fuel for the flames. His judgment and that of his assistants was, that a square of buildings quite a distance in advance of the fire should be demolished, and thus open a gap where a large force of the department could be thrown, and resist further destruction.

"Nevertheless, the destruction of buildings by these means served materially in preventing the spread of the flames in certain directions; and it proved, it seems to us, one of the most important elements in battling the flames. No active measures were taken to blow up any buildings, or to mine them in preparation for such an event, until many hours after the fire broke out. The right to cause the destruction of buildings to prevent the spread of a conflagration is not vested in the mayor, as many doubtless suppose, but solely in the chief engineer of the fire-department. Capt. Damrell was not of

the opinion that the exigencies of the occasion demanded these measures; and the necessary steps were not taken until Gen. Burt and other citizens urged the matter strenuously. Details of citizens were made to take charge of the different streets leading to the fire, and of different sections of the threatened districts, to take any steps deemed necessary under the circumstances. Among those appointed upon this detail were George O. Carpenter, Edward Atkinson, Alderman Jenks, Col. E. O. Shepard, and other well-known citizens. To the members of the Boston Insurance Brigade, for the most part, was intrusted the important duty of handling the powder, placing it in position, &c.; and, although great personal risk was incurred in all this, it is not known that the slightest accident occurred. The members of the brigade, and all others engaged in the dangerous business, performed their duties admirably.

"The first building blown up was on Milk Street, near Devonshire Street; and, soon after, the street below and the cross-thoroughfares were cleared for further operations of the same sort. But this was a work which ought to have been done long before, if it was to be done at all. A building on Milk Street opposite Federal, and another on the south-east corner of Milk and Congress Streets, were soon after sacrificed. The first explosion took place between two and three o'clock. At a later hour, the large building at the south-west cor-

ner of Water and Congress Streets was mined, and blown up with much better success than in some of the previous attempts at other points. The mode of distributing the powder seemed to differ at different points, and there was doubtless much disparity in the amount of powder used in different cases. In few instances, probably, was especial pains taken to 'tamp' the powder; that is, to place braces against the kegs, or to cover them with some heavy materials so as to compress the explosive powder as much as possible. Where the powder is placed in the cellar, and thus confined, the effect is to bring down the whole structure inward. The consequences are something after the style of what follows an earthquake-shock.

"Some of the early explosions availed but little; and the first really successful blow-up was at the building on the south-east corner of Milk and Congress Streets, recently cut away for the purpose of widening the latter thoroughfare. At this point, we believe, two attempts were made; the last proving effectual. Efforts were made to destroy all the buildings on the north side of Milk Street, between the new post-office and Congress Street. Gen. Burt had previously planned the blowing-up of buildings on Morton Place and the vicinity; but the powder sent for did not arrive in time. The first powder used came from Read's gun-store. Further supplies were brought from the magazine in Chelsea and the Navy Yard. The buildings on

the north side of Milk Street actually blown up were numbered from fifty-eight to seventy inclusive. At the building on the corner of Milk and Congress Streets powder was placed in the cellar, and also in the second story; and, when the explosion took place, that in the second story only was fired. The rest was probably fired when the building caught fire.

"Major-Gen. Benham visited City Hall at an early hour, and proffered his experienced aid to Chief Damrell and the mayor for the purpose of directing the mining operations. One of Gen. Benham's first recommendations was, that the building on the corner of Washington and Milk Streets, adjoining 'The Transcript' office, and occupied by Messrs. Currier and Trott, and also the building on the west side of Congress Street occupied by J. E. Farwell and Co., printers, and 'The Saturday-evening Gazette,' be destroyed, — the former to save the Old South Church when 'The Transcript' building should take fire, and the latter to interrupt the progress of the flames toward State Street. Another plan proposed by him was to blow up the buildings lying north of Water Street, near Kilby Street, and running through to Hawes Street; this being designed to stop the fire before it should reach Robinson and Brother's liquor-store, from which it was sure to communicate to the post-office and United-States subtreasury.

"The Currier and Trott building was subsequently

operated upon; and at about nine o'clock, when the fire was working through Congress Street toward State Street, the building at the corner of Congress Street and Congress Square (occupied by I. M. Learned and Co. as an eating-house, and forming a continuation of the building occupied by Farwell and Co. and 'The Gazette') was blown up. The explosion in Currier and Trott's building did not work the entire destruction of that edifice; but it had a singularly good effect upon the ruins of 'The Transcript' office, which was then in flames. It gave the latter a gentle shaking-up; and every thing of an inflammable character was precipitated between the walls. Between eight and nine o'clock, one or two buildings on Lindall and Kilby Streets were hoisted by a liberal application of gunpowder.

"When the fire threatened State Street, Gen. Benham counselled the blowing-up of different buildings on Kilby Street, and also the destruction of buildings above and below the old post-office building; but this was not done. At another time, under charge of the fire authorities and citizens' detail, the post-office itself was mined, with the intention of causing its destruction; but this plan was not carried out, as the onward march of the flames was checked.

"A large amount of powder was used in the various operations in Milk, Water, Congress, Lindall, and Kilby Streets. At least one hundred pounds of powder were

used in each building; and sometimes two hundred pounds, three hundred, and even a greater amount, were brought into requisition. Most of the powder was brought from the Navy Yard and other United-States depositories, or from the powder-boat in the harbor. Gen. Benham also ordered up two tons of the material from Fort Independence; and it was brought up on the engineer's steamer 'Tourist,' and landed at Central Wharf."

Whether time and investigation shall ever decide that there are better means of battling fire than with powder cannot be decided now; and though engineers may in theory object to its use, and the taxpayers may grumble when they are compelled to pay the full cash value of every building so destroyed, whether it would have been burned or not, it is yet doubtful if any thing can open a gap before a fire, in which to work in advance of it, so effectually as powder under the scientific management of careful hands. At a meeting of the chief engineers of Eastern Massachusetts, held in Charlestown several days after the fire, the course of Chief Engineer Damrell during the fire was fully indorsed.

It is pleasant to record how the brave firemen were remembered by the people, and their needs supplied with such liberal hands. Jordan, Marsh, and Co., the largest dry-goods dealers in the city, gave all the firemen blankets on the night of the fire, and afterwards sub-

scribed ten thousand dollars toward their relief fund; and were followed by "The Boston Herald," a thousand dollars; the Merchants' National Bank, five thousand dollars; and then by a long and honorable list of donors, who gave, for the families of the injured and killed, sums varying from a hundred to two thousand dollars.

How much Boston does owe its firemen and those of sister-cities! A debt of gratitude it is, as sacred and as binding as that we acknowledge toward the soldier who defends with his life our firesides and our families.

The Board of Engineers, at the time of the calamity, consisted of Messrs. John S. Damrell, chief; Joseph Dunbar, Zenas E. Smith, William A. Green, George Brown, John W. Regan, John S. Jacobs, Phineas A. Allen, Rufus B. Farrar, James Munroe, John Colligan, Joseph Barnes, Sylvester H. Hebard, Levi W. Shaw, George W. Clark, assistant engineers; Henry W. Longley, secretary; and Charles R. Classen, assistant secretary.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MILITIA.

THE civil soldiery of Massachusetts has been its salvation and safeguard in many a trying hour, and was of the greatest service during the exciting scenes of the conflagration. They turned out promptly and in surprisingly large numbers at the call of the adjutant-general, and defended life and property with a resignation under annoyance worthy of all praise.

There were no very arduous duties, and no great danger either to life or limb; yet he who, in time of peace, leaves his comfortable home and soft couch for barracks and hard boards, for the good of others, deserves much credit. It is impossible to over-estimate their services when the police-force was found to be so inadequate, and the city was falling into the hands of marauders, and sight-seers would have killed themselves in foolish, adventurous expeditions into the ruins, and when the work of water and powder was much retarded by the presence of cumbersome crowds. Ludicrous as some

of the movements and orders were, they have the thanks of a grateful public for performing their duty so well.

When the necessity for "the strong arm of the military" became apparent, Adjutant-Gen. Cunningham, by the advice of Gov. Washburn, issued the following order: —

SPECIAL ORDERS, No. 44.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
HEADQUARTERS, BOSTON, Nov. 10, 1872.

1. At the request of his Honor William Gaston, mayor of the city of Boston, the following-named organizations of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia are hereby ordered to report without delay at the City Hall: The First Regiment of Infantry, Lieut.-Col. Proctor commanding; Ninth Regiment of Infantry, Col. B. F. Finan; First Battalion of Infantry, Major Douglas Frazar; Second Battalion of Infantry (one company), Major Lewis Gaul; First Battalion of Cavalry, Lieut.-Col. Albert Freeman; and the First Company of Cadets, Lieut.-Col. Francis W. Palfrey.

2. Brig.-Gen. Isaac S. Burrill, First Brigade M. V. M., is hereby directed to take command of the above-named troops, and of such other organizations as may be ordered to aid in the care of the city in its great calamity; and he will consult with the chief of police of the city in regard to the disposition of the same.

By order of the commander-in-chief.

JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, *Adjt.-Gen.*

It became necessary, afterwards, to order out the Fifth Regiment of Infantry; but they were kept on duty only one day and one night. The headquarters of the Fifth Regiment were at the Parker House; First Regiment at 11, Pemberton Square; Ninth Regiment at Horticultural Hall; First Battalion of Infantry at City Hall; First Battalion of Light Artillery at the Sherman House; First Battalion of Cavalry at the City Hall; Second Battalion of Infantry at the armory on Cambridge Street; while one battalion was stationed in and about the huge Coliseum.

There are many hair-splitting points of law which are often discussed with regard to the militia at the great fire, one of which concerns the authority of the troops to guard the streets and ruins. Martial law was not declared in the city, and the soldiers were not appointed special policemen. But, whether they had any lawful authority or not, it is certain that the crowds *believed* they had, and acted accordingly. The soldiers were everywhere respected by the law-fearing public; and much trouble and property were saved to the people.

There was often a conflict of orders, which gave rise to considerable complaint; and at times unwarrantable things were done through a misunderstanding, or because of the ignorance of green soldiers. One robust guard refused to recognize any passes, and told the writer that he "did not care a d—n for Gen. Burrill or any other man:" and it is true that sometimes a gen-

tleman would get a certain pass from headquarters; and, before he reached the lines, the order to recognize those passes would be countermanded; or so soon afterward, that he would be rudely thrust outside the guard. We remember one sentry (bless him!), who, for "fifty cents a trip," let us through the lines without insignia, pass, or straps. Doubtless such proceedings were unavoidable among troops more used to peace than to war; and, while they would make the bravest troops in time of battle, they could not successfully "play soldier" in time of peace. It can safely be said, that many of the members of military organizations in Massachusetts are among the most cultivated, educated, and refined citizens. They tried to do their duty, and did work in harmony with police, people, and firemen, with the exception of one instance, where the guards on State Street refused to let a hook-and-ladder company pass their lines. A riot was only quelled by the interference of prominent men, whose presence had more of authority than the orders of the absent commander. One ludicrous exhibition of military rule occurred in the City Hall itself, and is thus related by one of the members of the Boston press: —

"Quite a commotion occurred at the City Hall in consequence either of a rigorous order of Gen. Burrill, or of a misunderstanding on the part of Major Gaul of the Second Battalion; the first according to Major Gaul, and the second according to Gen. Burrill. At about

noon, the colored troops, under the burly major, proceeded to clear the corridor of the City Hall; and everybody was hustled out. Expostulation was in vain. 'But I am a member of the Common Council!' — 'Can't help it, sah; military orders, sah; must go out.' And out the protesting and indignant member would have to go, assisted gently but firmly by the inexorable soldier. Officials of every class and position were hastened into the street with a bayonet at their coat-tails; and, for a time, there was colored martial law in the capital of the city. It was a most laughable scene, — the dignity of the alderman *vs.* the obstinate African soldier. They gazed upon each other like tigers; but the bright, sharp bayonets were more potent than words or contracted brows.

"Once out, nobody could get in. Alderman Power was among the unfortunates; his statement of his official position being unavailing against the ignorance and incredulity of the guard. He was finally successful, however; and several other city officials gained admission through the efforts of City Messenger Peters in their behalf. A gentleman who had a check of ten thousand dollars to pay the treasurer for taxes was intercepted, although he explained the nature of his business. On hearing of this condition of affairs, Mayor Gaston expressed his indignation, that, in such an emergency, the citizens should be prevented from entering their own City Hall to transact business, and sent at once to Gen. Burrill

for an explanation. That officer was not at his head-quarters, being at his dinner at Parker's; and thither the messenger was despatched. The general said he would see about it when he had finished his dinner. The messenger gave this answer to the mayor; but his Honor chose to see about it *at once*. He went to the Parker House immediately, and asked Gen. Burrill (with rather less suavity than is his habit) why he had issued the obnoxious order. On learning the action of Major Gaul, the general said he had given him no such order. The major says he did; and, as the order was given verbally, the question cannot be decided. At all events, the military guard was dismissed, and the City Hall rendered again accessible."

However, for two weeks the militia was kept on duty, much to the advantage of all parties, and much to their credit. A portion of the troops was quartered in the Old South Church; and the tramp and drum-calls reminded the reader of history of his Majesty's soldiers, and the time when they occupied and nearly destroyed the same structure, using it for barracks. For the benefit of future readers, we give the roster of the field and staff officers who did military duty in Boston at that critical time: Brig.-Gen. I. S. Burrill; Lieut.-Col. Hobart Moore, assistant adjutant-general; Major S. A. Bolster, assistant inspector-general; Capt. P. A. Collins, judge-advocate; Capt. E. R. Frost, aide-de-camp; Capt. F. L. Gilman, assistant quartermaster-general; Benjamin

H. Mann, acting medical director; and Capt. Henry W. Wilson, engineer.

The following order was issued at the discharge of the troops from duty: —

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 24.

Headquarters Troops for Special Duty,
Boylston Hall, Boston, Nov. 22, 1872.

The brigadier-general commanding, in retiring from the duties to which he was called by the calamity that recently befell the chief city of the Commonwealth, desires to thank the officers and soldiers under his command for the faithful and efficient manner in which their various and arduous duties have been performed.

Called into service in the midst of a terrible conflagration, which appalled the community, and concentrated the attention of the nation, while nearly every citizen was fighting flames or saving property, and when apprehensions of violence and disorder entered every mind, your promptness in answering the call, and your subsequent conduct, have won golden opinions everywhere.

Your prompt response to the summons awed every form of violence threatened, dispelled the fears of the community, established confidence and security, and made a resort to martial law unnecessary. You became at once the armed auxiliaries of the police-force of the city, subject to the civil authority; and these relations you sustained to the end.

It was a most perplexing service to perform in the heart of a great city in such a crisis ; and it is a matter for the warmest congratulation, that all the delicate and difficult duties of the occasion were so happily, promptly, and satisfactorily discharged: at no time was there conflict of authority, or clashing between the police and military. Throughout, the most perfect harmony and cordial good feeling existed between our organization and the municipal authorities.

Although, at times, most stringent orders have been issued, let it be well understood that they were dictated by duty, and demanded by the exigencies of the case ; and that all such orders have been executed in a manner calculated to give the least offence and inconvenience to the citizens, while fully protecting life and property in the guarded districts of our city.

Your conduct throughout this emergency puts at rest any doubt that may have existed touching the value of a well-trained militia organization.

The commanding general renews his congratulations to the entire command upon this proof of their good discipline, reliability, and efficiency.

Commanders of regiments and battalions are charged with the promulgation of this order throughout their respective commands.

By command of Brig.-Gen. I. S. Burrill.

Hobart Moore,

Lieut.-Col. and Asst. Adjt.-Gen.

CHAPTER XV.

THE POLICE.

THE entire police-force of the city numbered only five hundred and twenty-four men: which was a force sufficient for the ordinary duties, and large enough to protect the law-abiding people, and arrest all the criminals to be found in the days of peace and quiet; but it was not adequate for such an occasion as that about which we write. They were nearly all on duty at the same time, and were kept so for many hours by the unusual calls upon them to make arrests.

When the fire had become widespread, and owners of goods invited all who could help themselves to any thing valuable to do so, and carry it home, there were naturally many, who, at the risk of injury, would rush into the burning stores, and bear off some trophy. It was a considerate act in the owners, as they had saved all they could; and strangers had much better have the goods than that they should fall into the maw of the fire. It was no dishonest act, either, for men to

snatch from the flames a valuable article after it had been abandoned and given to them, and to carry such trophies home; although many would not do the latter. The number of such as did improve the opportunity to obtain a piece of cloth, a pair of boots, a shawl, a hat, or other article, was very large. These the police were obliged to treat as thieves; and at first the force attempted to arrest them all. Soon the lock-ups and jails were full to overflowing, and the corridors filled with "contraband goods."

Of course not one in a hundred was an actual thief; while there were aldermen and councilmen of adjoining cities, captains in the regular army, one minister of the gospel, and hundreds of wealthy men holding high social and official positions, who were thrust into the common prison with thieves, boot-blacks, vagabonds, and criminals. We have heard some of them laugh heartily over their incarceration, but have heard none cast the blame on the police.

It would be difficult to see how an officer who did his duty under the law could do otherwise than arrest the takers of such property. It had, nevertheless, a tinge of the ludicrous, and provoked much laughter.

A boot-black came to a hotel-keeper, and asked to sleep in Mr. B——'s room, and gave as an excuse that Mr. B—— was sleeping in his bunk down at the watch-house; and there were so "many big folks down there, the fashionable hotels must all be vacant." At last,

it was found to be impossible to lock up all the receivers of such property; and it also became so evident that very few of them were thieves, that the police contented themselves with keeping the goods, and letting the bearers go.

Saturday night, when Pearl Street was destroyed, many a poor *gamin* secured a new pair of boots who had never known such a luxury before. It was a touching sight to see the little fellows, after being given a dozen pairs of shoes, trying them on, and at the same time calculating aloud what were the sizes of their sisters' and brothers' feet. Hundreds of poor people clothed their feet with leather that would have been destroyed if it had not been given away; and feet are warm to-day which would have been pallid with cold but for that disaster.

Yet many lost their shoes and their liberty for hours, having marched boldly in the way of the police while loaded with presents.

Few were the numbers of those who deliberately engaged in thieving; yet the police must guard the city with the same care and diligence as though every street were full of them. Only about fifty persons were found during the fire by the regular police, who, after examination, were thought to be dishonest men. Four hundred thousand dollars' worth of property was saved in this way by the police; but who the owners were it was very difficult to tell.

The State Police Commissioners called in their force from different parts of the State, numbering about a hundred men; and they were detailed to act in conjunction with the city police in the protection and restoration of property. Capt. Charles E. Hammond was temporarily placed in the position of chief pending the election of Capt. George W. Boynton to that position. The officers were very efficient in the work of arresting drunken persons and preventing crime; while about fifty thousand dollars' worth of property was saved from loss by them.

In the dark night succeeding the gas explosion,* and when the gas was turned off, it was no small task, and required more than ordinary courage, for officers to search for criminals, or even to walk about the haunts of villains in the pitchy darkness.

There was so much drunkenness on Sunday, when the exhausted men foolishly tried to sustain themselves by drinking whiskey, and there were so many people in the city who on such occasions drink to excess, that it was deemed advisable by Chiefs Savage and Hammond to close the drinking-saloons, and forbid the sale of intoxicating liquors.

The following are the orders issued in regard to the same: —

"Officers, while on patrol or general duty, will notify all liquor-saloons to close their bars; and, if sales of

* Corner of Washington Street and Summer Street, Sunday night.

liquor are subsequently detected, the person so selling will be arrested at once, and brought to these headquarters.

"By order of the Police Commissioners.

"CHAS. F. HAMMOND, *in charge*."

HEADQUARTERS POLICE DEPARTMENT,
BOSTON, Nov. 11, 1872.

CAPT. ——— : —

Stop the retail liquor-trade, including beer, during this crisis. E. H. SAVAGE, *Chief of Police*.

These orders had a very marked effect upon the multitudes; and the disappearance of drunkenness from our crowded streets was a most gratifying feature, and demonstrated what a strictly temperance city *might be*.

There would have been a much larger number of thieves in the city had it not been for the almost perfect system of watching bad characters, and the good understanding which exists between cities upon such matters; as a large crowd of "roughs" started from New York for Boston at once, after the receipt of the news of the calamity, with the intention of taking advantage of the confusion, and appropriating whatever of value they could find unprotected. They were a most beastly set of scoundrels; and, once in the city, their lawlessness would have made the city very unsafe.

But the news of their departure from New York was telegraphed to Boston, and a detachment of officers was

sent to Springfield to intercept them. Just what arguments were used, or what threats made, we have been unable to ascertain; but it is known that nearly all went back to New York from Springfield, or left the train before its arrival at Boston.

By such wisdom and caution, exhibited in a thousand ways, did the police avert disaster, protect person and property, and show themselves true conservators of the public peace.

A "relief fund" for the police was started by a unique letter from Chicago, enclosing five hundred dollars, with the words, "For the Boys, B. P." It was sent by Elmer Washburne, chief of police in Chicago, to Col. Savage, chief of the Boston police-force.* Many acts of daring and consideration were rewarded as they should be; and many more would receive the testimonials due such deeds if the actors were known.

* Sent back afterwards with thanks.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE TRADES.

TO appreciate the full effect which the great fire had upon the boot and shoe trade of Boston, and to realize how great was the loss to the commercial world, it will be necessary in this, as in writing of the wool and the dry-goods trades, to consider the time taken, and the capital used, in establishing this feature of the city's commerce. Neither Boston, nor any branch of its traffic, was built in a day. Especially true is this of the boot and shoe trade. From the smallest of beginnings, and from the hardest of work, did the shoe and leather trade begin; yet its growth was marvellous. In a half-century it arose from an unpretending retail bartering to such importance, that ships, steamboats, and railways found themselves almost exclusively in its employ. Manufactories arose in all the suburban towns, as the city proper could not contain them; and even into New Hampshire and Vermont went the searchers after favorable sites for the building of shoe-shops. Pearl Street with its mil-

lions of wealth, and High Street with its mountains of leather, were only the heads of the great trade whose body and limbs extended far back into New England, and to supply the demands of which thousands of men and women were paid their weekly wages.

Fifty years ago, the shoe and leather trade was of such insignificance as to deserve no mention. There were no large manufacturing establishments; only one or two wholesale houses, and a number of "custom boot and shoe makers."

In the early history of the shoe-trade, the out-of-town manufacturers used to drive to town with their wagon-loads of boots, made by hand and with downright hard work. They always stopped at Wilde's Hotel, in Elm Street, which was kept for many years by Enoch Patterson. There, about the door, the bar-room, or the parlor, those pioneers of this great traffic sold their shoes and boots, and purchased their new supplies of leather: and the visitor at Wilde's on Wednesday or Saturday would have seen those little squads of shoemakers and leather-dealers; and he could not fail to note how, day by day, the numbers increased, the transactions grew in magnitude, while news of shoe-factories and of tanneries being constructed in the neighboring towns filled up the hours of gossip about the "office fireplace." Wilde's tavern was the shoe and leather exchange, to all intents and purposes, until the numbers and wealth of the traders led them to transfer their headquarters to

the American House near by. The first traders were Quakers from Lynn, among whom Nathan Burd, Isaiah Burd, Micajah Pratt, and Samuel Boyce, are considered the earliest shoemakers for the wholesale trade.

About forty years ago, the first wholesale boot and shoe store was opened on South Market Street by Amasa Walker, who retired from business about twenty-five years ago, and who has been a member of Congress. Mr. Walker now resides in West Brookfield. He entered into a partnership, by which the firm became known as Walker, Emerson, and Co.; and still exists, after many changes, in the house of Potter, White, and Bailey.

Soon after Mr. Walker's venture, the manufacturers whose establishments were out of the city began to open offices and take stores for the exhibition and storage of their stock; and, in a surprisingly small space of time, these salesrooms grew into wholesale warehouses. These were nearly all situated about Quincy Market, and in Blackstone, Fulton, and Central Streets.

It was not until about twenty years ago that the boot and shoe dealers began to move into Pearl Street, tending, like all the other branches of trade, to the southward. Fifteen years ago, there was a general stampede of the dry-goods dealers from Pearl Street into Franklin and Devonshire and Federal Streets; while the boot and shoe manufacturers followed close in their wake, and used the whole street, with several leading from it, ex-

J. MAYER & CO., LITH. 4 STATE ST. BOSTON.

FRANKLIN STREET, LOOKING UP.

J. MAYER & CO. LITH. 4 STATE ST.

FRANKLIN STREET, LOOKING DOWN.

clusively for the wholesale boot, shoe, and leather trade. The last dry-goods firm to move away from Pearl Street was Houghton, Sawyer, and Co. About eight years ago, the leather-dealers, who are naturally closely allied with the boot and shoe traders, began to move into Congress and High Streets; the latter being used, at their advent, for dwellings by Irish families, they having been, a score of years before, the home of Boston's most prominent men. It was made much wider; and magnificent stone buildings took the place of the tenement-houses, until it was one of the finest streets in the city. S. R. Spaulding was the first person who constructed a store on High Street. It was only a year before the fire that the last dwelling disappeared; and that was replaced by a granite structure, built also by Mr. Spaulding.

Meantime the shoe-trade became so crowded in Pearl Street, that it began to move into South Street, where, at the time of the fire, considerable improvement had already been made.

Pearl Street was a very fashionable dwelling-place forty years ago, before the dry-goods trade moved in; and at that time there were no business-houses nearer than Kilby Street.

Many people now living well remember the mansion of Mr. Pratt, known as "The Pearl-street House," with its large garden, and the houses owned by the Perkins family, one of which was given by Col. Thomas H. Perkins to the Institution for the Blind, and another of

which was presented to the Boston Athenæum by James Perkins, and which was occupied by that corporation for many years. The site of the old Athenæum was covered by Gov. Claflin's wholesale store. They will also recall the stately mansion at the corner of Pearl and High Streets, so well known as "Harris's Folly." Some idea of the magnitude of this trade, which brought in so much wealth and supported so many great men (among whom were Henry Wilson, William Claflin, John B. Alley, and Amasa Walker), can be formed by the amount of freight it was obliged to send by the railways during each year.

In 1871, 220,000,000 pounds of hides and leather, and 1,636,152 cases of boots and shoes, were transported on account of the manufacturers and dealers of New England. Estimating the average weight of hides at twenty pounds, of leather at fifteen pounds a side, and of boots and shoes at eighty pounds a case, and the distance carried at a hundred and seventy-five miles for hides and leather, and a thousand miles for boots and shoes, the aggregate number of tons carried one mile was 84,696,080.

After the abandonment of Wilde's Tavern (for neither hotel nor street could hold them all), the American House was made the general rendezvous of the trade until the recent organization of the Shoe and Leather Association, and the opening of an "exchange" in Pearl Street.

In "The Shoe and Leather Reporter" of a recent date, we find the following statement with regard to the losses sustained by the merchants engaged in this traffic: —

"There were four hundred and fifty-five firms and individuals burned out by the great fire. Of these a hundred and ninety-nine were wholesale boot and shoe dealers and manufacturers, a hundred and fifty-nine leather-dealers, fourteen hide-dealers, and the rest engaged in collateral branches, such as findings, last-makers, &c. It is estimated that there were destroyed three hundred thousand sides of sole-leather, worth a million two hundred thousand dollars; a million dollars' worth of sheep-skins and linings; five hundred thousand sides of finished leather, wax, kip, &c., worth two million dollars; forty thousand hides, dry and green, of upper-leather; and fifteen thousand barrels of tanners' oils, worth three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars, besides large quantities of other goods pertaining to the trade. We append some individual statistics: Coon, Crocker, and Hobart, loss a hundred and thirty thousand dollars; Milton, Gale, and Co., loss forty-five thousand dollars; James A. Roberts, loss sixteen thousand dollars; Warren Mallard and Son, loss twenty thousand dollars; E. and M. Faxon, loss ten thousand dollars; Claflin and Thayer, loss sixty thousand dollars; Albert Thompson and Co., loss two hundred thousand dollars; Horace Billings and Son, loss fifty-five thousand dollars;

Henry Poor and Sons, loss some four hundred and fifty thousand dollars; James O. Safford, loss fifty thousand dollars on building, besides some fifty thousand hides; Way, Hewins, and Reed, loss a hundred and forty thousand dollars; F. Upton and Co., loss twenty thousand sides sole-leather; Marsh Brothers, loss twenty thousand dollars; E. B. Phillips, loss a hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars; Leonard, Bundy, and Co., loss fifty thousand dollars; J. and H. K. Osborn, loss twenty-two thousand dollars; B. G. Boardman and Co., loss ninety thousand dollars on buildings, besides ten thousand hides; Bucking and Brown, loss forty-four thousand dollars; Edward Spaulding and Bumstead, loss twenty thousand dollars (their store was worth sixty-five thousand dollars, and was owned by the special partner, S. R. Spaulding); A. L. White and Co., loss thirty-three thousand dollars; Sears and Warner, loss sixty thousand dollars; Moseley and Dunn, loss sixty thousand dollars; L. Beebe, loss seventy-five thousand dollars; Hubbard and Blake, loss twenty-nine thousand dollars; Shaw, Taylor, and Co., loss five thousand dollars; Skilton and Dole, loss fifty thousand dollars; W. and E. Sawyer, loss nine thousand dollars; Johnson, Eaton, and Brackett, loss a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The principal dealers in sole-leather, whose names follow, lost an aggregate of two hundred and fifty thousand sides: F. Shaw and Brothers; Atherton, Stetson, and Co.; Henry Poor and Son; H. Billings and Son; Low, Hersey, and Co.;

Spaulding and Bumstead; N. W. Rice and Co.; Healey, Farnam, and Co.; A. L. White and Co.; Albert Thompson and Co.; Thomas E. Proctor and Co.; F. Upton and Co.; Henry Bond; J. W. Low; E. and M. Faxon; J. P. Rogers and Co.; McConnell and Gardner; B. G. Boardman and Co.; John B. Alley and Co.; Johnson, Eaton, and Brackett."

By "The Commercial Bulletin" of Sept. 2, we find that Pearl Street, during the previous week, had been "literally crowded with heavy teams of all kinds, loading up shoe-boxes to be taken to the various shipping-points; and Pearl Street has been one of the busiest localities in Boston. The California trade is gradually dropping off as new factories spring up in that State. One Boston firm, who has two factories in San Francisco, turned out last year over two million dollars' worth of goods. One of these factories is operated by Chinese labor."

The officers of the New-England Shoe and Leather Association at the date of the fire deserve a place in history; and we give them accordingly: John Cummings, president; Edward P. Bond, secretary; and E. W. Bumstead, treasurer.

At the earliest possible moment, land was leased of the city on the Fort-hill clearing for temporary stores while the burned district was being rebuilt; and, within a few days, iron buildings of imposing size and shape sheltered many of the energetic firms connected with that trade.

The wool-trade was an important branch of the city's commercial interests: it was nearly all located on Devonshire, Franklin, and adjoining streets; and its warehouses and stock on hand were, consequently, destroyed. It had long been of considerable importance, but was largely on the increase at the date of that great misfortune. The amount of wool imported during the ten preceding years sums up as follows: 1863, 14,147,278 pounds; 1864, 19,783,599 pounds; 1865, 11,821,280 pounds; 1866, 17,993,826 pounds; 1867, 11,480,507 pounds; 1868, 7,080,855 pounds; 1869, 14,629,743 pounds; 1870, 12,244,293 pounds; 1871, 28,144,159 pounds; 1872, 39,691,990 pounds. These amounts, together with large quantities of native wool, were used in the manufacture of fabrics for the American markets; and the destruction of such quantities seriously retarded the factories in the vicinity of Boston.

The quantity of wool destroyed was given by the best authorities as follows: Say a hundred and fifty thousand pounds fine scoured, forty-five thousand pounds tub, four million pounds fleece, a million pounds pulled, a hundred thousand pounds Cape, a million eight hundred thousand pounds California, two hundred thousand pounds South American, a million five hundred thousand pounds Australian, five hundred thousand pounds sundries; the total value being about four million five hundred thousand dollars. There were fourteen million seven hundred thousand pounds in the

United-States bonded warehouse; which, fortunately, were not destroyed.

The losses of those engaged in the paper interest were large. More than three-fourths of all the paper warehouses and firms in the city were completely burned out. Every one of the large houses was destroyed. Rice, Kendall, and Co.; H. M. Clarke and Co.; Cutter, Tower, and Co.; S. D. Warren and Co.; George W. Wheelwright and Co.; Wilder and Co.; Lyman Hollingsworth and Co.; B. H. Thayer and Co., — suffered more or less severely. These houses were mostly situated on Milk, Congress, and Federal Streets, in the section where the fire was hottest; and, consequently, but little of the stock they contained could be saved. The total loss was put in round figures, by a member of one of the most prominent of the burned-out houses, at three and a quarter millions in stock. The stock in store at the time of the fire was not very large. Of the leading houses, Rice, Kendall, and Co. probably had the largest stock on hand. This they valued at from seventy to seventy-five thousand dollars.

The effect on the trade by the fire was not of a disastrous nature. The progress of business was of course checked; but that was all. There were no failures, and no suspensions: there were hardships and "put-backs." But the men who suffered here, like those in other branches of trade, put on a brave look, and pushed ahead out of their difficulties speedily and grandly. When the

fire came, business was opening up good. The mills outside of the city were working on full time, and orders were plentiful. After it, in less than a week, orders came in; and the report from the trade generally was, "We're looking up, and will soon be out of the woods."

The dry-goods trade and its branches affected by the fire was so extensive, and its numbers so great, that its very magnitude prevents any extended notice. It will be a long time before any accurate estimate of it can be made; and even then there must be much more searching and calculating than will be made by busy Bostonians. The wholesale dry-goods business represented a capital of fifty millions; and it was nearly all destroyed in the fire. The names and losses would fill an entire book.

How three hundred large establishments could be consumed, with nearly all the stock on hand, and yet the trade move on, and there be so few bankrupts, is a study for those who have not been made acquainted with the reserve capital and energy which Boston ever holds. Within twelve hours after the fire, hundreds of dry-goods merchants were on their way to New York to purchase new stocks while their partners selected new rooms. It was said by cautious calculators, that there was more merchandise destroyed which belonged to the dry-goods trade than to all the others combined. It was enormous, but just how much no one can ever tell.

The clothing-business was second only to the dry-goods trade in its effects upon the general traffic of Boston. The thousands of working-girls thrown out of employment, the estimation of capital lost, and the time which it was necessary to take for the securing of other quarters, served to disturb the community more than any other one thing that happened in that week of horrors.

The hardware-trade also suffered severely, and a hundred other branches of mercantile life lost more or less. The commerce of the whole land was injured by it; and who shall say that the loss to the world, and the pain it entailed, were not greater than it would have been had a territory of the same size been burned over among the dwellings? At least two hundred and fifty acres of business-territory, if we reckon the different flats of the buildings destroyed, were taken away from the trade of Boston; yet her business prospered, and jokes were far more frequent than tears.

The number of firms burned out, according to estimates, on Summer Street, was a hundred and twelve; on Washington Street, thirty-nine; on Federal Street, ninety-two; on Devonshire Street, forty-one; on Otis Street, seventeen; on Franklin Street, forty; on High Street, eighteen; on Arch Street, seven; on Bussey Place, four; on Congress Street, ninety-seven; on Milk Street, seventy-four; on Pearl Street, a hundred and eighty-five; on Channing Street, three; on Kingston Street, three; on Broad Street, ten; on Winthrop Square, six;

on Water Street, twenty-three; on Bath Street, three; on Liberty Square, eleven; on Lindall Street, five; on Hawley Street, fifteen; on Morton Place, five; on Kilby Street, thirty-six; on Purchase Street, six; on Chauncey Street, two.

We also give the number of firms by trades: Ale and beer, two; auctioneers, five; bagging, two; billiards, one; builders, two; books, two; boots and shoes, two hundred and twelve; blacksmith, one; bookbinders, three; bankers and brokers, six; belting, four; brushes, three; carpets, three; clothing, twenty-four; cloth-finishing, one; coopers, two; carpenters, nine; cotton, six; curriers, four; commission, forty-five; coal, six; corsets, one; cigars, four; confectioner, one; cutlery, two; carriages, three; crockery, eight; dry-goods, sixty-six; drain-pipe, one; drugs and medicines, chemicals and dye-stuffs, eleven; express-office, one; engraver, one; furniture, one; findings (boots and shoe), thirty-three; flour, one; furnishing-goods, eleven; fancy goods, twelve; furs, five; grocers, five; gas-fitting, one; gloves, two; glassware, four; glue, two; hides, eight; harness, one; hosiery, two; hats and caps, ten; hat-blocks, one; hardware, fourteen; hotels and eating-houses, six; hoop-skirts, two; hair, six; ivory, one; ink, three; importer, one; jewelry, plated ware, and clocks, thirteen; junk and waste, four; leather, a hundred and forty-five; lithographing, two; linens, three; locks, one; leather-binder, one; liquors, one; metals, steel, iron, and

brass, nine; machinery and steam-engines, fourteen; millinery, eight; mercantile agency, one; needles, one; nails, one; oil, six; oil-carpeting, one; paper-boxes, three; photograph, one; paper-hangings, two; paper, paper-stock, and twines, twenty-six; patterns, one; paper-rulers, three; produce, one; palm-leaf, two; painters, two; publishers, six; patent-rights, one; printers and printers' materials, twenty-three; plumbers, three; platers, two; periodicals, twenty-four; railroad-supplies, three; railroad-dépôt, one; ruffling, one; rubber-goods, five; roofer, one; sewing-machines, two; small wares, ten; shirts, cuffs, and collars, ten; stationery, six; soda-water apparatus, one; saddlery, five; straw-goods, six; saws, one; shoe-machinery, four; shoddy, one; sponges, one; spool-cotton, two; scales, two; screws, one; straps, one; suspenders, one; silk-goods, five; stoves, one; stable, one; storage, one; teamster, one; type-founders, three; trunks, one; tailors and tailors' goods, eight; trimmings, seven; upholsterers, four; umbrellas, one; varnish, one; wool, twenty-one; woollens, twenty-two; wringers, one; wax-works, one; tags, one; yeast and essences, one: total, nine hundred and ninety-eight. To which may be added boarding-houses, six; dwelling-houses, forty-three; lodging-houses, fourteen; tenement-houses, four: total, sixty-seven.

CHAPTER XVII.

INSURANCE AND THE LEGISLATURE.

INSURANCE in its legitimate functions is a kind of charitable enterprise, in which the participants give a certain sum toward a general fund for the relief of such subscribers as meet with misfortune. It does not always answer the purposes for which it is intended; but is, as a general rule, an institution worthy of Christianized civilization, and of great advantage to the community. By means of insurance, the losses by the fire were largely distributed, and the consequences of the disaster made much less appalling. The *fifty-two million three hundred and fifty-eight thousand and five hundred dollars* secured by policies of the insurance-companies was of untold advantage to the business of the city, and was distributed nearly as follows: New-York companies, $7,850,500; Massachusetts companies, $30,710,000; Connecticut companies, $4,000,800; California companies, $75,000; Illinois companies, $30,000; Maine companies, $500,000; Missouri companies, $25,000;

Minnesota companies, $50,000; New-Jersey companies, $17,000; Ohio companies, $205,000; Pennsylvania companies, $2,776,500; Rhode-Island companies, $920,000; Wisconsin companies, $50,000; foreign companies, $5,250,000.

Out of the sum set against the Massachusetts companies, there must be taken several million to allow for the deficit where companies could not pay in full. Sad news indeed were the words "cannot pay in full" to those who already had sacrificed so near their all on the shrine of fire; yet many heard it, and wept.

No sooner did it appear certain, that, in many instances, the companies must fail, than the same stockholders, keeping the same names, attempted to organize new companies to carry on the business of the bankrupt one, or rather to get the benefit of the outstanding policies and their renewals. Whether there was too much haste to form new companies, and a neglect of the claims and needs of those who demanded payment for their losses, it is difficult for an historian, with so little time for investigation, to decide. Certain it is that there were dissatisfaction and complaint on the part of the losers, and much solicitude for new charters and new stock on the part of the insurers. But in the legislature of the State lay the power to give them a new lease of life; and to that they appealed.

There were other causes, however, why the legislature was called to meet; although the primary cause was

the failure to pay on the part of the companies. There would have been less need of financial assistance or for the credit of the city had not the companies been so sadly crippled by the awful destruction.

At the second meeting of the General Relief Committee, organized as before stated, the following resolution was adopted: —

"*Resolved*, That the mayor be requested, in behalf of the city, to request his Excellency the Governor of the Commonwealth to call an extra session of the General Court for the following purpose; viz.: —

" To pass a law enabling the city of Boston to make and issue, for not exceeding twenty million dollars in amount in the whole, its bonds, payable in not less than ten years, at a rate of interest not exceeding five per cent interest for those payable in gold, and six per cent for those payable in currency; to be called the Summer-street Fire Improvement Bonds; to be placed in the hands of a commission of not more than five persons, to be appointed by the mayor, with the approval of the city council, whose duty it shall be to lend such bonds or their proceeds to such owners of land burnt over by the recent fire who shall make application therefor, and commence rebuilding on the burnt land within one year from the date when the streets shall have been laid out anew and been made ready for rebuilding; and shall secure said loan upon the said land by a mortgage conditional for the use of said loan in rebuilding upon

said land so burnt over, and conveying a title satisfactory to the city solicitor; and the proceeds of said loan not to be advanced until the building on said land has made such progress as to insure its completion in the belief of said commission, and such further provisions and conditions to be annexed to said loan by the commissioners as shall in their opinion afford the greater necessity of its use for the purpose of rebuilding on said land and of its being repaid to the city."

The presentation of this resolution to the governor by the committee appointed for that purpose, and the solicitation of others interested in insurance, resulted in a special meeting of the Executive Council. Gov. Washburn presided: and there were present Lieut.-Gov. Tucker, and Messrs. Reed, Fitch, Stoddard, Macy, Winn, Hildreth, and Chase, of the Executive Council; the committee of the Citizens' Relief Committee, consisting of Messrs. William Gray, Ex-Gov. Claflin, Judge Abbott, Martin Brimmer, Otis Norcross, Avery Plumer; with Mayor Gaston, President Dickinson of the Common Council, and Alderman Jenks. Besides these there were a committee from the Boston insurance-offices, and the Hon. Samuel Hooper, the Hon. C. L. Woodbury, John B. D. Cogswell, Esq., and a few others.

After the council had been called to order, the Hon. William Gray said that he and his associates on the committee appeared before the council in perfect accord with the city government of Boston, and in complete

sympathy with them. The city government had passed an order desiring that a special session of the legislature should be called, to give it power to act on matters, so that no cavil could be raised in relation to their doings, with the intention to put Boston in the position she was on Saturday morning last. It was desirous to have many streets widened, and others straightened; and, for them to do this in a comprehensive manner, legislative action would be necessary. The area of the burnt district was about sixty acres, — equal to the Common and Public Garden combined. It was the general impression that the city government had power to do all this street-widening and laying-out; but it was found not to be so, and thus the aid of the General Court was necessary. The supposition is, that twenty million dollars' worth of buildings had been destroyed, some of these being very poor; and the estimate for rebuilding was some thirty million dollars, while the loss of personal property was set at from fifty million to eighty million dollars. The committee did not come to ask aid from the Commonwealth or any person, but to ask that the legislature might be convened to allow the city to exercise the power of eminent domain, and to enable the city to borrow money to enable her people to rebuild their stores and to resume business. In asking this, they were willing to have the act put in such form as would make the city perfectly safe in any loans which may be made from the treasury; and by the passage of

such an act the outside men who have lost their property will be benefited, as they would then be able to obtain money without going to extortioners. If the legislature passed such an act, he felt assured that within two years the burnt district would be rebuilt, and the whole business of the city be again in a prosperous condition.

Mayor Gaston then addressed the council, and said, that, as far as he knew, it was the unanimous wish of the people that a special session of the legislature should be called. He could see no objection to such a session, except the cost; but, when it was remembered that Boston paid one-third of this cost, — and, when the agencies of men doing business in the city are added, perhaps she paid one-half, — there could be no valid objection to the request. The session was asked for to enable the city to make improvements in her streets and the construction of her buildings; to give employment to thousands; and to keep the insurance-business now in the city from going elsewhere, and perhaps outside the State.

Ex-Gov. Claflin was the next speaker; and in a brief address he deprecated delay in the rebuilding of the burnt district on financial grounds, expressing the hope that the legislature would be convened at once. He knew there were men who would bring twenty millions dollars into the city to build to-morrow, were they assured the legislature would be called together; and

the question with him was, whether the business of the city should be allowed to go away for want of means, or be kept here by the fostering care of the city government.

Mr. Gray said that the expense of calling the legislature together would be about six thousand three hundred dollars; while the daily expense after the opening would be three thousand nine hundred and ten dollars.

Judge Abbott said he had consulted with very eminent legal men — such as Judge Curtis, Mr. Bartlett, and others — as to the constitutionality of the legislature passing an act to enable the city of Boston to loan money on the plan proposed; and all of them had no possible doubt as to its legality. He was desirous that the trade of the city should be retained; and he and others desired to pledge their property to help others who had lost their property. A panic was threatened; and he thought the only way to stop this was by convening the General Court at once.

Mr. M. F. Dickinson, jun., spoke in behalf of the young, active business-men of the city for a special meeting of the legislature, — men who had lost all their property by the fire, and who would be compelled to go away unless there was some immediate prospect of relief for them.

Mr. Avery Plumer urged the governor and council to take prompt action, so as to enable the National Government to get the whole square of land bounded by

Milk, Devonshire, Water, and Congress Streets, for the post-office, while the land was vacant; and he spoke of negotiations with the authorities from Washington for the Old-South-Church property, which had taken place on Monday.

Mr. Albert Bowker spoke for the insurance-companies in the city who have been compelled by their losses to go into liquidation, but in the place of which new companies were waiting to begin with capital all paid up; but, before they could do this, they must have the legislative authority. Mr. A. S. Wheeler spoke in the same strain; when Mr. Gray made a closing address in favor of a special session.

Mr. J. B. D. Cogswell of Yarmouth thought no extraordinary necessity had arisen for calling the legislature together, as such a course would tend to create a panic. If the legislature met, it would probably remain in session a month or more; and then the action taken would be liable to be reversed by the General Court of next year.

Hon. Samuel Hooper said he was not opposed to having a special session of the legislature, except that he feared it might tend to create a panic. The bank presidents had held a meeting with the comptroller of the currency; and they had deemed it inexpedient to have the legislature convened.

Hon. Charles Levi Woodbury in a few words opposed a special session, on the ground that it would tend to

cause a financial panic; and the Hon. W. B. Spooner took the opposite ground.

The hearing then closed; and the council went into secret session for some fifteen minutes, when it was voted to advise the governor to call a special session of the legislature, to assemble on Tuesday next, at twelve o'clock noon.

The following day, this proclamation was sent to the members of the legislature: —

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY WILLIAM B. WASHBURN, GOVERNOR.

A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas, It is provided by the Constitution of the Commonwealth, that the governor, with advice of council, shall have full power and authority, during the recess of the General Court, to call it together sooner than the time to which it may be adjourned or prorogued, if the welfare of the Commonwealth shall require the same;

And whereas I am officially advised, by the unanimous action of its municipal government and a large committee of its most eminent citizens, that the recent fire in Boston has, in their judgment, rendered certain measures of State legislation imperatively necessary: —

Now, therefore, Believing that the emergency contemplated by the Constitution has occurred, I do issue

this my proclamation to the members of the General Court, calling them to assemble at the State House in Boston on Tuesday, the nineteenth day of November instant, at twelve o'clock noon, to take such steps, and act upon such matters, as may be deemed expedient in consequence of the great calamity which has suddenly fallen upon the chief city of our Commonwealth.

Given at the Council Chamber in Boston this twelfth day of November, in the year one thousand eight hundred and seventy-two.

By his Excellency the governor, with advice of council. WILLIAM B. WASHBURN.

OLIVER WARNER,
Secretary of the Commonwealth.

The legislature met according to call, and proceded at once to consider, by committee-hearings and otherwise, the desires of the petitioners. What laws were passed for the relief of the city, and what measures defeated, cannot be stated at the time this book is issued.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES.

THERE was a large number of publications in the city, the owners of which were among the losers in the great fire. The most unfortunate among the newspapers was "The Boston Daily Evening Transcript," a periodical which well deserves the compliment of "The London Telegraph," that it is "a literary news publication of a most excellent order." Their loss would have been a national calamity had not the proprietors been endowed with a wonderful amount of energy, courage, and hope. While their building was yet burning, they prepared for the next issue from the office of "The Boston Daily Globe." The building then being burned was the fourth structure occupied by the proprietors of the paper, started in July, 1830, at Nos. 10 and 12, Exchange Street. In May, 1845, the establishment was removed to Nos. 35 and 37, Congress Street; where it remained until the erection of the building Nos. 90 and 92, Washington Street, in 1860.

By each of these removals, larger and more convenient quarters were secured. The contrast between the premises in Exchange Street, where the paper was printed forty-two years ago, and the large and elegant edifice in Washington Street, suggests the great changes which have taken place in the publishing of newspapers since 1830. In July, 1830, the first number of "The Transcript" was issued by Dutton and Wentworth, then the State printers. Mr. Lynde M. Walter, the editor, was one of the proprietors. The enterprise was an experiment of doubtful success. The paper was coldly received by its contemporaries of the Boston press, some of whom refused to exchange with it. But "The Transcript" kept on in the even tenor of its way; the ability and tact of Mr. Walter winning friends and patrons, and commanding the respect of influential citizens. It was the pioneer of the evening press in Boston, and is now the second in age of the Boston dailies; "The Advertiser" alone being its senior.

"The Transcript" was under the sole management of its first editor until his death in 1842. After this date it was conducted with signal success for several years by a sister of Mr. Walter, aided by Mr. Henry W. Dutton, the senior proprietor, who still lives to witness the growth and prosperity of the little "Transcript" he took the lead in launching more than forty years ago. After the retirement of Miss Cornelia W. Walter, the paper, for a series of years, was under the control of Mr. Epes Sargent.

In February, 1853, he was succeeded by Mr. Daniel N. Haskell, who has been editor for nineteen years. The two immediate predecessors of the present editor are now occasional contributors to the paper.

The building occupied by "The Transcript" at the breaking-out of the fire was one of the finest structures in the city. It was situated on the easterly side of Washington Street, the second estate south of the old South Church, on the site of the premises occupied for many years by Smith and Gore. The structure was erected, in a great measure, of enduring and fire-proof materials, — iron, stone, and brick, — and most favorably compared with those of similar newspaper-establishments in our own or other cities of the United States. Its ground dimensions were a hundred and three feet in depth east to west, with a frontage-width of twenty-seven feet on Washington Street, gradually reduced, by angles and recesses in the north side of the same, to twenty-one feet at the rear or east end of the site, and bounding upon a passage-way communicating directly with Milk Street.

"The Boston Post" had the misfortune to be *nearly* burned out; which is, in every sense, the next thing to a conflagration. The new post-office building did most excellent service in warding off the flames from the structure owned by the publishers of "The Post," on the corner of Devonshire and Water Streets, and from which "The Post" was issued. But the demon crept so near,

and so often seemed to have such a powerful grasp upon it, that much damage was done, and much inconvenience suffered, because of the hasty moving. "The Post" was started by Mr. Charles G. Greene in 1831, who proposed "to exclude from it every thing of a vindictive or bitter character," and who has most honorably kept his promise. It has dealt fairly with all parties while advocating the tenets of the Democrats; and many a man honors and supports the paper because of its considerate generosity and cheerfulness who is much opposed to its politics. It is the leading Democratic paper of New England; and yet no politician on the other side has, to our knowledge, found in it any desire to take a "mean advantage" of him. Consequently there was genuine sadness when that cheerful publication was in danger, and afterwards regret on every hand that it should suffer in the general ruin.

Fortunately the "Journal," "Herald," "Advertiser," "Traveller," "Times," "Globe," and "News" were not touched by the flames; although the "Traveller" and "Journal" were in uncomfortably close proximity to the devastation, and were considerably disturbed by the preparations for moving.

"The American Homes," monthly magazine, published by Charles H. Taylor and Co., and edited by Col. Taylor, the senior partner in the publishing-firm, suffered considerable loss in type, paper, magazines, plates, valuable wood-cuts, chromos, and presses stored at the

office in Water Street, and at the composing and press rooms on Federal Street. "The Success of the Nineteenth Century," as this magazine has been so often named, on account of its wonderful increase in circulation, had no sooner been established on Cornhill, in the building occupied by Rand, Avery, and Co., than a fire broke out which drove the publishers a second time into the street; but, with commendable zeal, they secured a place at 61 Cornhill, and, in twenty-four hours, were filling their orders. Several hundred of their premium chromos and a package of magazines were all that was saved of very much value.

"The Pilot," a weekly publication owned by Patrick Donahoe, one of the veteran publishers of Boston, was located in the fated Franklin Street, in the same building with the great Catholic publishing-house and the Emigrant Savings Bank, all under the management of Mr. Donahoe. "The Pilot" has an able corps of editors; and the writer was listening to a speech from the editor-in-chief, at the press dinner, when the alarm of fire was given. It is one of the very best Irish-American publications in the States. It appeared for a short time in half-sheet; but was very soon issued at the usual time, and of the former size.

The loss to Mr. Donahoe was over two hundred and fifty thousand dollars; and, as if it were the determination of the Furies to destroy every thing, he was also a heavy loser in the subsequent fire on Cornhill. "The

NIGHT SCENE. FRANKLIN St.

Boston Globe" mentioned this matter a few days after the fire in the following apt manner: —

"We have received 'The Catholic World' for December from Patrick Donahoe, 360 Washington Street. Mr. Donahoe, though an earnest Catholic, will forgive us for subordinating the consideration of 'The Catholic World' to our sympathy with his individual case. 'Individualism' may, or may not, be bad in theology; but it is very natural in business and in matters of personal friendship. There is much controversy as to which particular class of Christians will be tenants of 'the burnt districts' in the next world; but all publishers, at least, have a tender feeling for any of their brethren of the press who may happen to get into it in this. Mr. Donahoe has been so brave, resolute, cheerful, and confident in meeting the calamity which destroyed his magnificent building on Franklin Street, that the hearts of all of us go out to him in cordial sympathy. The burning, afterwards, of a whole edition of 'The Pilot' in Rand and Avery's fire, made most of us have a semi-Catholic interest in the paper. Any third dispensation of Providence in the same direction will make some Protestants sympathize with the creed as well as with the man. He has been so thoroughly undaunted by vexatious interruptions with his ordinary work and business, that the inference is that he must have got some of his strength of will and heart through the church to which he belongs. At any rate, we feel sure that the 'fire-fiend'

can never beat Mr. Donahoe, either in a fair or unfair fight, but that he will continue his Catholic paper, and distribute his Catholic books, in spite of all the malice of fate and fortune."

"The Waverley Magazine," owned by Moses A. Dow, was located in Lindall Street, and was published from one of the most convenient and neatly-arranged printing-establishments in New England. The destruction of the office did not, however, interfere with its regular publication.

"The Boston Journal of Commerce," which was hardly out of its infancy, was "thus early made to fly from its nest," but appeared promptly on the next day of publication.

"The Saturday-evening Gazette" was driven from its long abode on Congress Street, and lost a vast amount of material. Fortunately for the readers, Mr. Parker had no thoughts of suspension; and, with hard work and many annoyances, a temporary abode was found for the homeless "defender of honest men," and "The Gazette" appeared and re-appeared as if there had been no struggle and no loss.

Among those periodicals, the offices of which were located in the burnt district, were the following: —

"American Painter," weekly; "American Railway Times," weekly; "American Union," weekly; "Ballou's Monthly Magazine;" "Banner of Light," weekly; "Boston Almanac and Business Directory;"

"Cabinet-Maker," weekly; "Christian Monthly;" "Freemason's Monthly Magazine;" "Gleason's Home Circle," and "Gleason's Monthly Companion;" "Harness and Carriage Journal;" "Journal of Applied Chemistry," monthly; "Boston Journal of Chemistry," monthly; "Little Christian," monthly; "Monthly Novelette;" "New-England Postal Record;" "Shoe and Leather Record," weekly; "Shoe and Leather Reporter," weekly; "Shoe and Leather Trades Journal," weekly; "Sierra Magazine," monthly; "Temperance Press," weekly; and "The Yankee Blade."

There were many large printing-establishments consumed, where vast quantities of material and unbound periodicals and books were temporarily stored, which were owned by firms whose places of business were not included in the devastation; so that many publishers were heavy losers by the fire whose place of business remained unchanged. Wright and Potter, the State printers, had, besides their own enormous stock of type, presses, paper, plates, cuts, engravings, and furniture, a vast quantity of property belonging to the State and to individuals. The same might be said of a number of other printing-offices which passed out of existence on the wings of the wind. The loss to the owners of newspapers, magazines, and printing-material, was over one and a half million of dollars.

CHAPTER XIX.

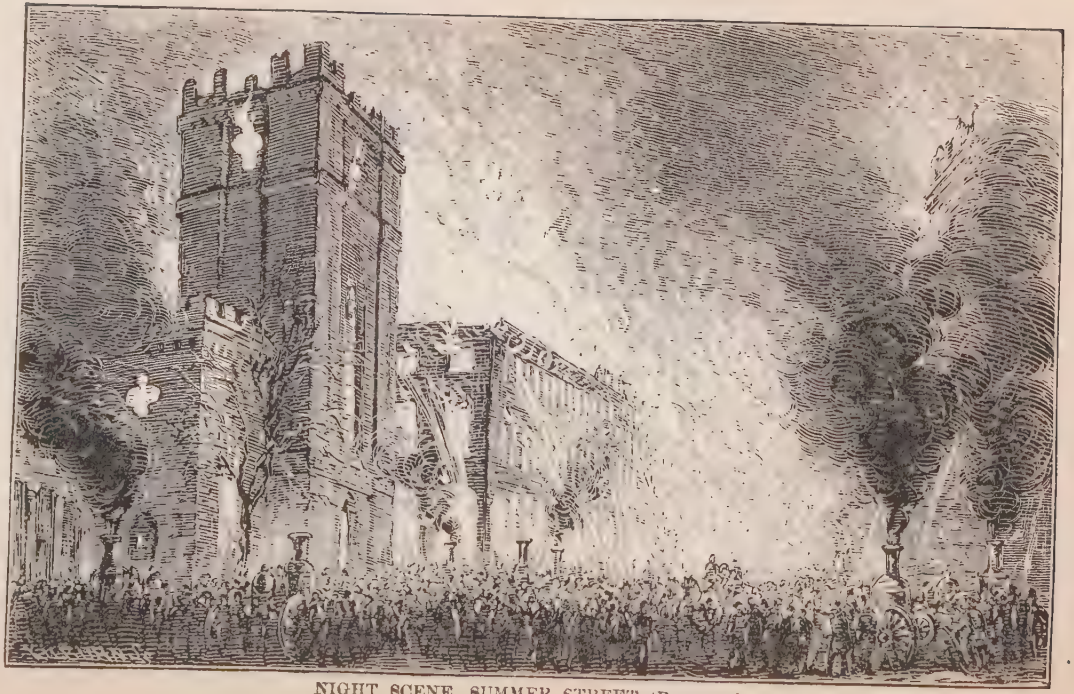
FACTS AND FIGURES.

THERE are so many items which cannot be readily classed in a work of this kind, that the author has deemed it best to place them all together in one chapter.

The following report was made by the officers of the United-States signal-service with regard to the fire: —

To the Chief Signal-service Officer of the Army, Washington, D.C.: —

In reply to your telegraphic despatch, received this morning, directing me to make a full report of the meteoric phenomena attending the recent great fire, I would respectfully say that the wind at this station, during the progress of the fire, varied from north-west to north, with a velocity of five to nine miles per hour; the weather being clear, cool, and pleasant. On approach-



NIGHT SCENE, SUMMER STREET (BILLINGS).

ing the fire on the north or windward side as close as the heat would allow, the in-draught of air through the burning streets assumed the character of a brisk wind, probably sixteen or eighteen miles per hour; while the heat was so intense as to cause smoke, steam, &c., to be carried up in spirals to a great elevation. On the south or lee side the induced currents of air were very strong, — probably thirty or thirty-five miles per hour, — carrying the fire bodily to windward. This state of affairs appears the reverse of the Chicago fire, where the strength of the wind was sufficient to overcome the induced currents, and the fire burned to leeward. It appears as if the high wind permitted the in-draught to rise at a considerable angle after reaching the fire, leaving a large space of rarefied air in its front, inducing stronger currents to flow, which, on meeting the in-draught, gave the spiral or whirlwind form to the ascending current. During the fire, a flock of ducks passed at great height overhead; and the light reflected from their plumage made them appear as fire-balls passing rapidly through the air. Many who saw them called them meteors, and likened them to the balls said to have been seen north-west during the great fires in that region. As an example of the great heat diffused, I would state, that, during the night, I exposed a thermometer in the observatory to the full glare of the fire, when it rose nearly five degrees, although placed upwards of two thousand feet from the burning district,

and dead to the windward of it. No other phenomena occurred, the barometer rising slightly, and the weather remaining unchanged. H. E. Cole,

Observer of the Signal Service, U. S. A.

The police of the other cities came nobly to the assistance of their Boston brethren ; Chief Knowles of Providence, Stimpson of Cambridge, Barrett of Lynn, and Jackman of Salem, having tendered the services of their several departments, and rendered efficient aid.

An examination of the books of the assessors showed the heaviest losses of real estate to be as follows, the figures given being the last assessed valuation upon the various estates previous to the fire: The Sears Estate suffered to the amount of upwards of five hundred thousand dollars ; the loss of H. H. Hunnewell for himself and as trustee was over three hundred and thirty thousand dollars ; that of the Messrs. Faxon Brothers, two hundred and fifty thousand dollars ; and the Simmons Estate, three hundred thousand dollars. The valuation of the splendid block on Pearl Street, numbered from 69 to 95, owned by E. Brooks, was two hundred and five thousand dollars ; but it could not be replaced for that amount.

Harvard College was a loser to the amount of about a hundred and fifty thousand dollars ; and a hundred and fifty thousand dollars would not repair the loss of

Mr. William B. Spooner. The loss to Mr. Patrick Donahoe on real estate was two hundred thousand dollars. Mr. William F. Weld's loss in buildings was upwards of a hundred and fifty thousand dollars; Mr. James M. Beebe's, a hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars; Daniel Denny's heirs, a hundred and thirty thousand dollars; Isaac Rich's heirs, three hundred thousand dollars; T. B. Lawrence's heirs, a hundred and twenty thousand dollars; Mary and Ann Wigglesworth, eighty thousand dollars; Edward Wigglesworth, a hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars; Leman Klous, a hundred and eighty-five thousand dollars; E. B. Phillips, two hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars; Nathan Matthews, ninety-five thousand dollars; Christine Nilsson, estate on Otis Street, fifty-one thousand dollars; Jacob Sleeper, eighty-five thousand dollars; Luther Park's heirs, sixty-eight thousand dollars; Charles O. Rogers's heirs, eighty thousand dollars; Stephen Dow, sixty-three thousand dollars; Axel Dearborn, fifty-five thousand dollars; William Gray, a hundred thousand dollars; Liberty-square Warehouse Corporation, ninety-five thousand dollars; Levi L. Tower, sixty thousand dollars; Gardner Brewer, seventy-five thousand dollars; Torrey Estate, sixty thousand dollars; L. M. Standish, fifty thousand dollars; Edward Cruft's heirs, eighty thousand dollars; James H. Beal, forty thousand dollars; Wright and Whitman, eighty thousand dollars; Charles Merriam's heirs, seventy-five

thousand dollars; William Sohier and L. Saltonstall, trustees, a hundred and fifteen thousand dollars.

At a meeting of the Lumber-dealers' Association of the city of Boston and vicinity, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted: —

"*Whereas*, Our city has been visited by a terrible calamity, inflicting serious disaster upon the whole community, and realizing the importance of the earnest co-operation of all who are able to contribute to the immediate restoration of such structures as the wants of our people may require: it is therefore

"*Resolved*, That this association tender, to all wishing to rebuild in this city, the stock of lumber now in their possession at such prices as have recently ruled in their respective establishments.

"*Resolved*, That, as the interests of our business are identified with the interests of those who have so recently suffered, we hereby pledge ourselves to stand firm against any advance in prices, unless made by absolute necessity."

The city government took prompt measures to care for the destitute, and to provide for the rebuilding of the devastated territory. The members of the city council worked earnestly with the mayor; and the wisdom of their ordinances, with reference to the widening and straightening of streets, added much to the

value of real estate, and to the convenience of the business which will return to the burned territory.

One of the most noticeable events was the removal of the contents of the sub-treasury after the partial destruction of the old treasury-building. Quarters had been taken at the custom-house, in the same room formerly occupied by that office. At three o'clock, in accordance with arrangements made, the sub-treasurer, Franklin Haven, Esq., Gen. A. B. Underwood, surveyor of the port, and C. R. Morse, the government truckman, were stationed in front of the sub-treasury with several trucks, to take charge of and convey the precious property. Two companies of marines from Charlestown under the command of Capt. Cullom, and a detachment of the Fifth Artillery from Fort Independence under command of Lieut. Whistler, acted as guard while the valuables were brought from the building. Scrip, bills, and stamps were brought down the steps; and a large number of people watched the operations, feeling proud of their trifling ownership in the great national funds. Bags of gold and silver were unearthed from their hiding-places, wet and muddy, and safely deposited in the wagons. The clerks of the sub-treasury superintended the transfer from the vaults, and watched with peculiar care the precious bags containing fifteen millions in gold on their way to the receptacle in waiting. All ready, the military guarding the trucks

made an imposing march to the custom-house amid the cheers and approval of the multitudes witnessing the novel show. Arriving at the custom-house, a pathway was made to the old vault, guarded by two files of soldiers; and the valuable metal was tugged into the custom-house.

The work of opening safes and vaults was one of the most interesting features connected with the conflagration. Upon every one of them the hope of an individual or corporation had been based; and none but those who have passed through such trials can feel how sick at heart the watching, waiting ones become. Oft-times the iron-bound treasure-box is discovered buried far below the surface, where the intense heat of the early fire is still continued; and on several occasions they have been found roasting in the midst of what was intended for the winter's supply of coal, while the solid masonry of the establishment itself was heaped as in a funeral-pile above them. In such a case, ribs of steel, and bars of brass, filled in between with the best of composition, could offer no effectual resistance. Indeed, safes of any make proved but an uncertain dependence when exposed to the full fury of the flames. Properly-constructed vaults, however, gave very general satisfaction; in nearly every instance, their contents being preserved unharmed. The valuables in the vaults of the Everett Bank, the Bank of North America, and the Revere

VIEW OF RUINS FROM SUMMER STREET (Photograph by SMITH).

Bank, were found in a good state of preservation. In the Bank of North America, securities and money amounting to over a million dollars thus escaped destruction. The report from the Freeman's National Bank, which was located on Summer, near the junction of Bedford Street, was less favorable. It appeared that a large amount of discounted promissory-notes belonging to the bank, and other securities belonging to private individuals, were placed in the outer safe, or vault. This was not sufficiently firm to withstand the fierce heat; and the door became warped, so that these valuable papers, amounting to a million three hundred thousand dollars, were destroyed. The inner safe was all right. A large portion of the dues to the bank represented by the promissory-notes was paid by the parties for whom the paper was discounted; but, as the books of the bank were destroyed, the bank-officers had to depend on the honesty of those of their debtors who had saved their own books, and on the memory of others who came forward to make payment. Among the individual losers was Lieut. Burley of the second police, who had a large amount of bonds there deposited. The bank-loss was said to be about a hundred thousand dollars in securities.

When the fire reached the corner of Milk Street, the officers of the Five-cents Savings Bank in School Street, who were on duty guarding the institution, were

notified by the mayor that it might soon be necessary to blow up their bank-building in order to save the City Hall. In forty minutes the money and securities in the vaults of the bank, amounting in value to eleven million dollars, were removed to the house of the president, Paul Adams, No. 123, Charles Street, and there guarded, until the danger was past, by a squad of police.

The Emigrant Savings Bank saved its valuables, and was the next day opened at the corner of Washington and Avon Streets. Over the door was placed the following placard in bold black letters: "God has watched over the savings of the poor. In him we trust forever."

The loss to Harvard College was thus estimated by President Eliot: "The president and fellows of Harvard College lost, by the fire of Nov. 9, stores in Franklin, Arch, and Hawley Streets, which, with the land on which they stood, were valued by the city assessors at five hundred and sixty-two thousand dollars. The annual rents of these stores were thirty-eight thousand dollars, the tenants paying the taxes. The stores were insured for two hundred and sixteen thousand dollars; but, of this amount, only about a hundred thousand dollars will be paid. The president and fellows will be forthwith called upon for assessments in mutual insurance-companies to the amount of six thousand three hundred dollars; and they are further obliged to re-insure, in part, buildings, collections, and

libraries, at an immediate cost of several thousand dollars for premiums. Before the stores burnt can be rebuilt, a year's taxes upon the land which they covered will also be due.

"Just before the fire, the president and fellows had found that the strictest economy would be necessary on their part in order to make the probable income of the current year meet the salaries and ordinary expenses; and they had felt themselves forced to retrench in all departments, although well aware that such retrenchment would be injurious to the university and to the interests of education. They now find themselves suddenly deprived of thirty-eight thousand dollars of annual income, and subjected to extraordinary expenses to the amount of at least twelve thousand dollars.

"The president and fellows are therefore compelled to ask the alumni and other friends of liberal education to contribute fifty thousand dollars for the immediate needs of the university, in order that they may keep the present organization unimpaired during the current year, and may not be forced to reduce the very moderate salaries of the professors and other instructors.

"It will cost about three hundred thousand dollars to rebuild the burnt stores; while the insurance to be recovered is only about a hundred thousand dollars. That they may rebuild these stores, and be again placed in as good a financial position as they were in before the fire, the president and fellows must further appeal to

generous and public-spirited friends of university education to subscribe two hundred thousand dollars for this purpose during the next twelve months.

"Many of the constant friends of the university resident in this vicinity are themselves involved in the disaster, and are temporarily unable to contribute to her necessities."

The air-currents caused by the conflagration carried partially-burned pieces of paper to a long distance. Scraps of check-books and ledgers were picked up in East Weymouth on Sunday morning; and a fifty-dollar bill, badly scorched, was found in South Abington, twenty-one miles away.

Though Saturday night was remarkably clear, and there was but little to reflect the flames except the great pall of smoke, the light of the fire was seen on vessels ninety miles from shore. The light was seen in Portsmouth, at the Isles of Shoals, and even as far away as Portland.

Detachments of police from Cambridge, Lynn, Salem, and Providence, have rendered valuable assistance to the authorities. From Providence twenty-eight police were sent, and were stationed over the goods placed on the Common.

In the very heart of the burned section, a wooden door with glass panels was left swinging upon its hinges, as good as new. It was in the arched basement of a building which withstood the pressure of the falling walls.

Thirty-five portraits belonging to the collection of our fallen heroes were destroyed in the fire. The lost portraits included those of Gen. Lander and Col. Hodges, both of which were to have been sent to the Peabody Institute, Salem, the next week.

Among the remarkable contributions to the relief fund was one from Blake Brothers and Co., bankers on State Street, for ten thousand dollars; one from Jordan, Marsh, and Co., for ten thousand dollars; one from C. F. Hovey and Co., for ten thousand dollars; and fifteen hundred dollars from the town of Woburn, Mass., which had been appropriated for a public celebration.

There were thirty-three insurance-companies doing business in Boston, of which twenty-two were obliged to suspend business. Some of them, however, re-organized with new capital. Their total loss was about thirty million seven hundred and ten thousand dollars. There were sixty-eight New-York insurance-companies having agencies in Boston; their total loss being seven million eight hundred and fifty thousand five hundred dollars.

Three companies suspended. Pennsylvania had sixteen companies represented by losses in the fire, the aggregate of which was two million seven hundred and seventy-six thousand five hundred dollars. Connecticut had eight companies, whose total losses amounted to four million nine hundred and fifty-two thousand five hundred dollars. Ohio had four companies; loss, two hundred and five thousand dollars. Rhode Island had four companies; loss, nine hundred and twenty thousand dollars, two of which suspended. California lost seventy-five thousand dollars; Illinois, thirty thousand dollars; Maine, five hundred thousand dollars; Missouri, twenty-five thousand dollars; Minnesota, fifty thousand dollars; New Jersey, seventeen thousand five hundred dollars; Wisconsin, fifty thousand dollars; foreign companies, five million two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Total loss to insurance-companies, fifty-two million three hundred and fifty-eight thousand five hundred dollars.

Among the losers by the fire are the Deaf Mute Association, Boston College, and Methodist Seminary (probably one-quarter of Isaac Rich's bequest of a million), and Tufts College eight thousand dollars. Mr. J. E. Farwell, late city printer, saved nothing but his books from the recent fire, and lost about eighty thousand dollars above his insurance.

The following are resolutions of the General Relief Committee, and doubtless represented the opinions of nearly every citizen of Boston : —

"*Resolved*, That the appeal to the city of Boston to establish anew in the burnt district the lines of all the streets which are too narrow or too crooked for the present and future wants of the chief city of New England, imperatively demands immediate action.

"*Resolved*, That the citizens of Boston respectfully but earnestly request the commissioners of streets and city council of Boston immediately to revise and establish the lines of the streets in the district upon a comprehensive and liberal plan, relying on the character, energy, and progressive spirit of the people to approve such action ; and we pledge ourselves to support the commissioners and city council in the exercise of the power and responsibility belonging to them in this regard.

"*Resolved*, That the citizens of Boston earnestly request the city council to prohibit any further construction of Mansard roofs, and to limit the height of all buildings within the city limits, so that such a conflagration as has just taken place may not be repeated.

"*Resolved*, That the time and opportunity for the erection of a Merchants' Exchange in the centre of business, associating together all engaged in mercantile pursuits, has arrived ; and we strongly advise that steps be taken at once to procure a charter from the legislature, to purchase a proper site, and to erect a suitable building

adapted to the uses, and worthy, of the merchants of Boston."

It is thought that no town in Massachusetts suffered so severely by the fire as Newton. Of the one thousand firms burned out, about seventy-five are residents of the town.

A business-capital amounting to two hundred million dollars, belonging to residents of Newton, was invested in Boston at the time of the fire.

The trustees of the Boston, Hartford, and Erie Railroad, voted to build a new passenger-station of corrugated iron; the dimensions of the new structure to be sixty feet front and two hundred feet deep, with covered platforms beside the tracks; the cost, about twenty thousand dollars. The new freight-house to be of corrugated iron, sixty by three hundred feet. The trustees leased the adjoining premises on the south, which gives an entire frontage on Federal Street of six hundred feet. The company converted a passenger-car into a ladies' waiting-room, while a baggage-car served the purpose of a baggage-room.

On Sunday evening, after the great fire had been extinguished, there was a second conflagration, which threatened the southern portion of the city, and created an almost insane excitement among the people, who

began to think that the fire was almost invincible. It broke out about midnight in the immediate vicinity of the spot where it first originated. It came from the gas, which exploded in the buildings on Summer Street, near C. F. Hovey's, occupied by William R. Storms and Co. The front wall of the building was blown into the street, and fire set to the store which extended back into Central Court.

Owing to the frequent gas-explosions, the firemen were for some minutes deterred from going into close proximity to the burning building; but, despite the danger of such a course, the brave fellows made a dash, and soon had streams playing on the burning buildings.

From Storms's establishment, the flames speedily communicated to the extensive building on the corner of Summer and Washington Streets, occupied on the ground-floor by Messrs. Shreve, Crump, and Low, jewellers, and dealers in elegant gas-fixtures. The upper stories were occupied by Wheeler and Wilson sewing-machine warerooms; Lowell and Brett, engravers; and by two or three custom-tailors.

The efforts to stay the progress of the devouring element were unavailing; and in less than half an hour the magnificent block on the corner of Summer and Washington Streets, in the windows of which thousands had often feasted their eyes on displays of rare jewelry and articles of *virtu*, was destroyed.

The flames leaped from the windows, and curled themselves into a fatal embrace about the cornices; and soon the vast pile was wrapped in its shroud of flame.

One gas-explosion followed another in rapid succession. Several soldiers and firemen were prostrated, and, in one or two instances, severely injured.

A woman named Martha E. Hutchinson, who occupied rooms in the second story of the building, was awakened from her slumbers, and, in her wild fright, leaped from the window to the pavement, and was picked up seriously injured. The flames began their work upon the large adjoining stores of Hovey and Co., and Jordan, Marsh, and Co.; but the application of wet blankets and carpets to the roof, and the almost superhuman efforts of the firemen, saved those costly edifices. The gas was soon after turned off from the entire city; and although there were several explosions underground afterwards, which shook the ground like earthquakes, there was but little damage to other public or private property.

The destruction of numerous printing-establishments by the fire had caused a great increase of work in those remaining. Prominent among these was the office of Rand, Avery, and Co., one of the largest in New England. Fronting on Cornhill and Washington Street, its broad front of six stories (especially when in the early evening its numerous lighted windows revealed

the scores of busy workmen) had long been an object of attraction to strangers, and a landmark to the citizens of Boston. Conscious of its large resources and its facilities for work, many of the burnt-out periodicals had sought and found a resting-place within its walls; and the office had been running evenings in the endeavor to accommodate them, as well as to keep up the regular work of its own customers.

Cornhill Front of Rand, Avery & Co's Printing Office.

Every precaution had been taken against danger from fire. After the *great fire*, a guard had been kept at

night; pails filled with water had been placed on the various floors, and extinguishers put in accessible positions.

This foresight, however, proved of no avail. Between six and seven o'clock Wednesday evening, the 20th, when many of the employés were in the office, while others were on their way to and from their suppers, fire was discovered in a bin in which waste paper from the presses was deposited. Fruitless attempts to extinguish it were made by those present; and an alarm, thrice repeated, soon called out the whole fire-department. So rapid was the spread of the flames, that the girls employed in the press-rooms and the composing-rooms had barely time to escape through the heated, blinding smoke; and in a few minutes the blaze burst through the roof and upper windows.

The public mind was still morbidly excited on the subject of fires; and when to this is added the fact that many of the tenants of the buildings in the neighborhood were concerned in the printing and publishing business, and knew the combustible nature of the contents of the burning block, and knew also that in its extensive vaults were stored thousands of plates of the standard works of the publishing-houses of James R. Osgood and Co., Lee, Shepard, and Co., Woolworth and Ainsworth, B. B. Russell, the Mass. S. S. Society, Henry Bill, and other firms, it may be imagined with what intense interest the spread of the fire was regarded.

Bravely and skilfully did the firemen fight the foe which had dealt them such hard blows so recently. Firmly stood the solid brick walls under the pressure of a weight of machinery which no ambitious stone structure of the "burnt district" had borne (for honest workmen did honest work when this old building was reared); and at ten o'clock the great crowds dispersed with the comfortable feeling that the fire was under control, and that Boston was saved from another night of terror, — saved by the strength of brick walls and iron doors.

In the portion of the building in which the fire originated the destruction was complete; presses, paper, plates, and type being heaped together in a broken, charred, and melted mass, while the elevator furnished a road for the flames to reach the counting-room. The upper stories of the adjoining buildings were also swept by the flames; but the thick brick walls by which the block is divided, with their iron doors, the heat of which was kept down by their being drenched with water, saved not only the block from entire destruction, but probably prevented a still more serious result.

The books of the firm were secured and put in a place of safety by the bookkeeper at the first alarm; and as much other valuable property was saved by the employés as the short time allowed. A large quantity of work in different stages of progress was consumed. The "Every Saturday" was partly destroyed in sheets, and partly melted on the press. "The Pilot," ready to go to

press, was destroyed for the second time. The printed sheets of "Old and New" had just been carried to the binders; but the plates were lost. The title of "The Well-Spring" couldn't save it. "The Advocate of Christian Holiness," "The Home Circle," "Littell's Living Age," "The New-England Register," "Our Dumb Animals," and other publications, suffered more or less. "Carleton's" pen-sketch of the great fire received added illustrations *not* by Billings; and Mrs. Partington's mop was of no avail against the flood. Among the larger works burned were the writings of orthodox and heterodox teachers. Both were tried by fire; *and both failed to stand the test.* The first chapters of this work shared the same fate.

The vaults of Messrs. Rand, Avery, and Co., were not injured in the least by the fire. These vaults are a wonder in themselves. Here are stored from one to two million dollars' worth of stereotype and electrotype plates, among them some of the noblest literary productions of America. Here are also the plates of many unique works, which are nearly out of print, and which would probably never be reprinted were the plates destroyed.

The loss of Rand, Avery, and Co., and of their customers, was very large. The extensive stereotype establishment of C. J. Peters and Son, the bookbinderies of S. K. Abbott and of Adams and Baker, the publishing-houses of Henry Hoyt, the Mass. S. S. Society, and

Knights and Co., the paper store of Strahan and Son, and other firms, — all tenants of Rand, Avery, and Co., — were seriously damaged by water.

Of all the discouraging-looking places imaginable, a half-destroyed great printing-office after a fire bears the palm. When it is considered that the mere transposition of one little type in ordinary times turns the sublime into the ridiculous, and pathos into bathos, what a chaos must be the mingling of many millions of such mischief-makers! Undismayed, however, the proprietors, — who had seen their establishment grow from the one room in which the senior partner had pulled his own hand-press, to its present proportions, — while the fire was still burning, caused a card to be inserted in the morning papers, asking the forbearance of their customers for the delay in delivering work, and stating their intention to go on as soon as possible; while a second card notified the employés that their full pay would go on, and requesting them to report as usual at the office.

The manifestation of such a spirit was a sure guaranty that this great establishment would soon recover from the blow, and take its accustomed place among the leading printing-houses of the country.

The Old South Church has been such a prolific theme for discussion in view of the great changes in store for that locality, that we cannot forbear to insert a short reference to its remarkable history.

The most notable of the early pastors of the Old South were the Rev. Mr. Willard, the Rev. Dr. Joseph Sewall, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Prince, the Rev. John Hunt, the Rev. Dr. Eckley, and the Rev. Joshua Huntington. The Rev. Benjamin B. Wisner, settled in 1821 at the death of the Rev. Mr. Huntington, was pastor until his death in 1835; and he was followed by the Rev. Dr. George W. Blagden, who only recently preached his farewell-sermon, and retired from active life. Rev. Jacob M. Manning, D.D., the present pastor, was settled as a colleague in 1857. The Rev. Mr. Willard, who was pastor in 1692, was one of the decided opponents of the witchcraft persecutions which at that time prevailed to such terrible extent. It was during his pastorate that Gov. Andros carried matters in Boston with such high hand, choosing at one time to occupy the Old South for Church-of-England services, and at many other times to interfere with the services of the regular society to suit his own pleasure, caprice, and convenience. At the opening of the Revolution, the Rev. John Hunt was the sole pastor; and he leaving the city soon after for a visit to Brookline, and being prevented from re-entering Boston without a pledge to remain, the church, during the exciting days which followed, was without a pastor. Mr. Hunt died in Northampton, whither he had retired in December, 1775. In 1778, services of the Old South Society were resumed in King's Chapel by the favor of that society, under the

preaching of the Rev. Joseph Eckley, who was ordained the next year. Four years after, the work of repairing and restoring the Old South was begun; and on the 2d of March, 1783, it was rededicated. The great fire only hastened the decision of the society to remove to the more fashionable Back-Bay section of the city. It had determined some time before on a partial removal at least to the Back Bay, where a chapel, with which a church is ultimately to be connected, is already approaching completion. The proposition of United-States officials, made after the fire, to take possession of the old church for a post-office, met with considerable opposition and protest: but the advocates of change overpowered those of sentiment; and a majority-vote was passed by the trustees, which was confirmed by a majority of the pew-holders, to give over the old landmark to the destroyer of all things at all venerable in this country, — sometimes called Progress.

The Chicago fire is a topic not yet fruitless in interest; and our own recent calamity leads us still more to refer to this destruction at the West, concerning which we here present a few facts. The fire began on the evening of Saturday, Oct. 7, 1871, at half-past nine, by the kicking-over of a lamp in a small cow-barn on the corner of De Koven and Jefferson Streets. The cow that did the deed has become famous in consequence. In less than ten minutes the fire embraced the area

between Jefferson and Clinton Streets for two blocks north, and was rapidly pushing eastward towards Canal Street.

In an hour the flames were so far beyond the control of the firemen, that the engines were behind the advancing fiery element, and were unable even then to afford the aid necessary to control the farther progress of the fire. It was then steadily moving to the northward, and had embraced Taylor, Forquer, Ewing, and Polk Streets, and was rapidly grasping after others, running swiftly in two solid columns towards the north at midnight. The total consummation on Saturday by the flames amounted to eighteen acres.

When it seemed as if the fire had been stayed, it broke out again, beginning its second part in the terrible drama on Sunday evening, and moved under a strong wind for a long distance till it met the southern boundary of the fire of the night before. The fire had begun on the west side, and, burning to the river, cast its brands across to the south side, igniting buildings here and there at points somewhat outside of a direct course, and long before it could have reached them. To aid the progress of the flames, a strong gale was blowing, which swept every thing along in irresistible fury. It was the hope, as well as the supposition, that, as the gale was blowing from the west and south, the portion of the north division westward of the fiery line of march would escape; but the fire had become so

strangely uncontrollable, that it moved both east and west.

Though the fire began on the west side, it did its slightest damage there ; while it burned an area on the south side nearly a mile in length, and half a mile in width, and on the north side reached a mile and a half, extending in width from the lake to the river. When the work had all been accomplished, and the devastation was looked upon as completed, and not progressing, it was found that twenty-six hundred acres were burned over, eighty thousand people were rendered homeless, and something like eighteen thousand buildings were destroyed. The real check to the progress of the flames was the blowing-up of buildings, which formed barriers that the fire could not cross. Gen. Sheridan ordered and superintended this work, — a labor for which he was blamed at the time, but a work which was found efficient in our own conflagration.

The scenes during the fire have been so often and so graphically told, that it is needless to repeat them ; and all who have any remembrance of the furious burning will call to mind the bridge laden with those who would escape the flames, but found only their own destruction thereby ; the hanging of ruffians to the lamp-posts ; the heroic but helpless efforts of the firemen of Chicago, and from other cities which sent aid ; and the thousand and one other little incidents which could only be told in a long article. The spirit of the citizens at the time, when

villains who attempted to further the fire were strung up on lamp-posts, is shown in a little item from "The Chicago Tribune" of Wednesday, — the day after the fire ceased, — reading, "Bridget Hickey was arrested for setting fire to a barn in the rear of a house in Burnside Street. By some mistaken idea of clemency, she was not hanged."

Among the prominent buildings destroyed on the south side were the Michigan Central Dépôt, Pacific Hotel, Sherman House, and ten other hotels, the court-house, the gas-works, Crosby's Opera-House, McVicker's Theatre, Hooley's Opera-House, Wood's Museum, Dearborn Theatre, Post-Office and Post-Office block, the Western News Company's large book-houses, several of the finest and largest business-blocks in the city, twenty banks, telegraph-office, Chamber of Commerce, insurance-blocks, eight churches, seven newspaper offices, and many others, which only detailed accounts of the fire at that date contain. On the north side were destroyed many large school-buildings, hotels, some of the finest churches, grain-elevators, breweries, tanneries, theatres, hospitals, and the finest business-blocks and private residences. No bridges remained, except at Division Street and North Avenue.

There were about two hundred missing men, women, and children at the close of the fire; but the number was greatly lessened as time proceeded. The number of fatalities was large. In extent, the Chicago fire must

stand first among the many large ones in history. But the wholesale destruction was not more terrible than the reconstruction of the city has been wonderful; and the people of Boston can do no more in rebuilding on the site of our perished business grandeur than to imitate the action of their brethren of the West.

CHAPTER XX.

SCENES AND INCIDENTS.

IF the historian felt no responsibility, and could, without injustice, omit any mention of bad deeds, and record only the just and noble actions of men, his task would be an enviable one. Such opportunities do sometimes occur, as the lives of the most eminent historians prove; and happy indeed were they to shun the evil, and court the good. But even then there could be no such satisfaction as there is in recording "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," and yet having little or nothing of wrong or dishonor to say with regard to the people or time about which they write. Thankful are we that the latter task is ours in this chapter, and that there appears no crime to mar its pages, no gross wrong to be condemned.

These incidents are given to the public as we heard them, and after careful investigation that few or none of them were rumors, gossip, or idle tales. In them

human nature has shown itself worthy of itself, and the actors an honor to their city.

An act of youthful heroism was performed by a little boy, which deserves a leading place in history. He was the attendant of an old blind man, and was often seen, before the fire, guiding him along Broad Street; the old man having his hand on the boy's shoulder. It appears that this blind man and his guide lived in a tenement-house just back of Pearl Street, in the Fort-hill district; and when the flames came through the block, from Pearl Street to the tenements, the man and boy were still in their room, or else had gone into the place for some purpose, and stopped at the landing of the stairs in the second story. All the other people had long before abandoned the block; and it was thought that all were safely out.

The flames were already curling about the window-sash over the door; and occasional puffs of dark smoke came out the doorway. The writer was standing near by at the time, and was called upon to assist in removing a heavy piece of furniture, which had been thrown from the window; but, before he had reached the spot, the fire flashed out of the window, and glared with such heat, that all turned and fled. Just then there came a cry, "There's a boy in that house!" and immediately several men rushed toward the now smoke-hid doorway, followed by the writer. It was a dangerous undertaking to enter that hall-way in the face of such smoke and such

sweltering heat. But the sound of a child's voice gave nerve, and the desire to save overcame the fear of death; and into that Stygian cloud they rushed, and with a single leap cleared the banisters, and mounted the stairs. Just then, the expanding air burst out the window near the landing of the stairway; and, for an instant, the smoke gave way to the fresh breeze that entered by this new channel. What a sight! Not all the tales of heroes, martyrs, and adventures, we had read or heard, contained a parallel to this. In an open doorway which led into a room already filled with fire, in which it was not possible for a human being to live for a single minute, stood the old blind man, with his hands before his face, attempting to enter that fiery furnace, evidently believing that by that room lay his way into the street. But the little boy stood behind him, with one foot against the casing of the door, and tugged away at the old man's coat, endeavoring with all his power to pull the blind man back toward the stairway. The little bare-headed, ragged fellow was crying most bitterly, and exclaiming, "Oh, do, *do* come out! This is the way! Oh, do come out!" But the bewildered dweller in darkness tried not to heed the little hero's entreaties, and had already taken a step into the blazing apartment when he was seized and borne down the stairway amidst a dense volume of smoke and little spirts of the encroaching fires. Hardly had man and boy been placed in the street before the roof of the adjoining building

fell in, crushing the walls, and demolishing the stairway by which they had just escaped. Bystanders gazed upon them as upon persons for whom God had directly interfered; while the boy seized the old man's hand, and led him down Oliver Street, saying reproachfully, and with tearful eyes, "You orter come with me when I *pull* you so."

During Sunday night, the escaping gas from broken pipes penetrated the sewers throughout the neighborhood of the burnt district, particularly at the corner of Washington and Summer Streets: and, notwithstanding the supply had been partially cut off, at an early hour the sewers were full, and by twelve o'clock explosions became quite frequent; and it was decided to cut off the supply entirely.

Consequently, on Monday night, for the only time since the gas-works were established in 1828, our city was left in darkness, which was only lighted by a resort to oil-lamps or candles, principally the latter.

The scene in the dining-saloons was certainly the most amusing. People sat down to the table to eat their suppers; and, instead of the usual cork-stoppers in the pepper-sauce and ketchup bottles, they found candles. Most people took the condition of things as they found them, — as if "nothing had happened." The loss of light added to public excitement, and compelled the closing of theatres and lecture-rooms. This state of affairs, however, lasted but two nights. On Wednes-

day the supply of gas was sufficient for all purposes; and in the evening the streets were as bright as ever, and we were "out of darkness into light" again.

This interference with the gas-works caused a large loss, and was a great trouble to the gas company. The difficulty attending the adjustment of their affairs in the burnt district was peculiar. In the first place they lost twelve hundred meters, which were worth twenty dollars apiece, together with the registration of gas used after Oct. 1, as nearly all their customers in this district were quarterly-paying customers. They could not collect any more than the consumers see fit to pay. But the company estimated the consumption up to the date of the fire, and presented the bills, leaving it to the honesty of the consumers to pay or not.

We have no doubt but these gas-bills, like the burned notes and evidences of indebtedness, were paid by all who could. Alas! there were some who could not pay the gas-bill, yet whose notes a week before would have been taken, at any bank in Boston having the money, for two hundred thousand dollars.

The curiosity of the multitude to see the fire wherever they could get access to it was so great, in many instances, as to render them almost indifferent to danger in any form. Even when orders were given for blowing up buildings, the sight-seers frequently lingered

much nearer the edifices to be demolished than ordinary prudence ought to have allowed. An instance illustrating this indifference occurred on Milk Street on Sunday forenoon. Directions were issued to blow up a block, and the usual warning was given by the police. This did not have the desired effect in getting the crowd back. Soon one of the insurance protective wagons drove up to the scene. The driver remarked to those near him that they were in danger, and had better retire. One of the bystanders flippantly asked where the danger was. The driver, standing up, and taking hold of the blankets covering his load, shouted out, "There are a thousand pounds of powder in this wagon, and the air is full of sparks!" It is needless to add that the vicinity of that team was cleared of persons as quick as the liveliest locomotion would allow.

In 1866, a one-armed and ragged soldier came into the store of Mr. K——; and was such "a creature of compassion," that Mr. K—— employed him about the store, although there was no necessity for another hand. At last, Mr. K—— found that the soldier was of but little service in the store, and secured a minor place for him in the custom-house. After that time the merchant lost all trace of the veteran, and very naturally concluded that he was at work somewhere on small wages and in poor clothes. The fire ruined Mr. K——, notwithstanding his high financial, social, and business position among the princes of the Boston trade.

On the morning after the fire was conquered, when the merchant was standing by the piles of brick and granite which marked the site of the grand edifice he had once occupied, and was sorrowfully considering his overwhelming misfortune, there stepped up to him over the pile of bricks a well-dressed, one-armed man, whom the merchant did not recognize, but who nevertheless offered his remaining hand, and said in a familiar way, "How d'ye do?" The merchant scanned the features of his companion closely, but could not say that they had ever met. But the stranger quietly remarked that he was the soldier to whom Mr. K—— had been so kind: and, thinking that Mr. K—— "might not be flush," he had "taken a run down" from his paper-mill in New Hampshire; and, if several thousand dollars would be of use to Mr. K——, the cash would be ready the next day. It appears that this occurrence came to the ears of Mr. F—— and Mr. W—— of Cambridge, both very wealthy men; and they generously concluded to assist Mr. K—— with sufficient capital to give "him a fair start" (which was a large amount). Many men would consider themselves rich if they had what Mr. K—— received as profits during the first month of trade in his new location and on his new capital.

"One of the strangest scenes of the conflagration was in the large open spot of ground still termed Fort Hill, There hundreds of poor people deposited their valua-

bles, taken hastily but carefully from the tenements which seemed doomed, and, wrapped in sheets and blankets, laid them here for a while until the question should be solved when their homes were to be swept away. Women, some of them with little children, sat by their household gods protectingly, keeping watch over what may have been their all. In some cases, men and children were seen asleep under coverings made of bedclothing and household furniture. The articles seen in the hundreds of piles which covered the territory embraced every thing by which housekeeping is carried on, and considerable merchandise from the neighboring stores. There were boxes, barrels, chairs, mirrors, crockery, glass, beds, bureaus, sofas, scales; plants even: nothing seemed too trivial to be saved. New loads of goods were constantly arriving, over which the watchers took their stations. Nothing could be done until it was seen whether the fire would spend its force before it reached their homes; and, heartsick, they sat there over their chattels all day, waiting, waiting for a solution of the problem. One man, apparently a day-laborer, won the good-will of the crowd by taking a little half-clad girl, perhaps four years old, wrapping her up warmly in a blanket, and kindly holding her and pacifying her until the mother was found. The awful terrors of the fire often affected weak human nature; and cases of fainting were frequently seen, and occasionally instances of loss of reason."

When the fire reached Hawley Street, Sergeant Weir, of the Hanover-street police-station, was told that there were a number of sewing-machines, belonging to the working-girls, in an upper story. He secured teams after much trouble, and carted away two large loads of these machines. When we consider that each machine was some poor girl's entire possession, we say of the sergeant, "Well done!"

Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe was among the contributors to the relief fund, as will be seen by her letter: —

Otis Norcross, Esq., — I send enclosed a hundred dollars to the fund for the firemen.

I could wish it were a hundred times that sum; and then it would be inadequate to express my honor and reverence for those brave, devoted men who saved Boston at the risk, and, alas! too often by the sacrifice, of their own lives.

No soldier that died for our common country deserved greater honor, or a more lasting memorial, than did the gallant men whose charred and blackened remains have been borne from the ruins of the fire.

Would that they might be inscribed on an imperishable monument, that those dearest to them might see and feel how much Boston appreciates the preciousness of noble lives freely laid down for her!

With deepest sympathy for all these sufferers,

I am truly yours,

H. B. Stowe.

A fair sample of the behavior of several hundred men of whom we heard is seen in the action of a landlord on Washington Street, who, after closing a lease at the same rate he had asked for the building prior to the fire, exclaimed, "I could have got a couple of thousand dollars more; but I guess I'll feel that amount better if I live a few years."

Rev. Dr. Samuel Osgood of New York wrote to "The Evening Post" of that city from Boston, saying, —

"There is great comfort in the simple fact, that the best treasures of Boston cannot be burnt up. Her grand capital of culture and character, science and skill, humanity and religion, is beyond the reach of the flame. Sweep away every store and house, every school and church, and let the people with their history and habits remain, and they still have one of the richest and strongest cities on earth; and the wealth that they have stored up in every enterprise, and in every land, and on every sea, would soon restore their city to its magnificence. Every true Bostonian is heir to a heritage that cannot be lost; and he is partner in the character of a community, that, for a hundred years, has given the nation its best literature and most substantial patriotism."

During the first week many relic-hunters were in the burnt district, having in some way eluded the guards;

and it often happened that they either went off under arrest or with a broken head, having ventured too near the tottering walls. One day, two well-dressed young men became quite inquisitive as to why several burnt timbers had been placed over an excavation on Purchase Street, and were told by the workmen to "clear out." They left, firmly believing that there was something underneath which would reward their investigations if they could only get a chance to search. Finally they went back, unobserved as they thought, and, in their haste, fell into a sewer, from which they were taken out in a damp condition by the very men whose orders they had so disregarded. This is only one of the many laughable accidents which befell the searchers for relics. During the week, seven or eight fell into a man-trap, in the shape of a tank of oil, on the corner of Congress and Broad Streets. At this place, the officers, when bothered too much, were able to square accounts with several of these gentlemen of leisure by directing their attention to the elegant relics obtainable on the other side of the tank.

A large amount of property was returned, after the fire, by persons whose consciences would not give them rest until they gave up their booty. In one case, five thousand six hundred dollars were sent back. With a package of shoes came the following note: —

Nov. 12, 1872.

MESSRS. ——, — The small shoes were taken from the sidewalk on the night of the fire; the large ones from a store, abandoned, I am confident, by the proprietors, and ready to perish by the flames. I did not, at the time, believe that there was any thing reprehensible in the act. Be that as it may, I now neither like the idea of being classed with thieves and robbers, nor care at such a time to exult over any plunder great or small. I cannot tell from whose store they were taken. They will fit some needy feet, and are at your disposal.

Yours truly,

There were several little episodes connected with safes which were quite amusing. One merchant was so scared, that he left his money and papers outside his safe, and went home with the keys in his pocket. A bookkeeper in a store on Broad Street, whose employer lives in Salem, went down to the store to remove the contents of the safe; and the only means of conveyance he could find was a buggy, without any horse, that happened to be standing in the street. With no more ado, he dragged it round to the office, filled it with books and valuable papers, and then pulled the heavy load across the city to Brimmer Street, where it was emptied, and given to a stable-keeper to advertise.

A correspondent speaks of a safe of the E. R. Morse manufacture, where "the chemical action of fire and

gilt paint" burned the letters of the maker's name "deep into the iron, seeming to eat into the sides; while it melted the legs, which ran off as in a blast-furnace. The fire happening to be above it, the contents were saved. But the heat was so intense over the whole region as to melt and destroy all safes which were fully exposed to its fury." The same correspondent tells of the warping effect of cold water on over-heated safe-doors. One burst open like a cannon; and its contents were at once consumed.

A safe-manufacturer, who refuses to permit the publication of his name, was once a workman in a shop; and, conceiving the idea of starting for himself, he went to a wealthy man for assistance. It appears to have been freely given; and the manufacturer, ten years afterwards, made an "extra safe," and gave it as a Christmas-present to the merchant who assisted him. In the fire it carried safely through a terrible test over two hundred thousand dollars' worth of stocks and bonds.

A quantity of silver and gold coins, in the safe of E. C. Dyer, at 158 Devonshire Street, was partially welded together, the silver turned completely black, and the gold spotted with jetty drops, with portions of the edges melted away. The money was contained in a tin tray with two covers, in a japanned tin box, which was enclosed in a thick steel box placed inside the iron safe. The door of the safe was slightly warped by the intense

heat, causing the destruction of books and papers, and affecting the coin, triply protected as above stated.

"While the flames were whirling and leaping along the south side of Franklin Street, the proprietors and employés of the great Catholic publishing-establishment, 'The Pilot' building, made tremendous efforts to save their stock. But the fire ran so swiftly, — 'flame-footed' indeed, — that they were compelled to relinquish all idea of transporting their goods to a place of safety; and a hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars' worth of costly altar-services, priestly ornaments, sacramental vessels, crucifixes, representing the pomp and glory of the Catholic Church, were hurled into the streets, or given into the hands of the hundreds who thronged to take them, and were begged to carry them away and keep them, rather than see them sacrificed. Huge collections of books, costly editions of imported works, were heaped upon the holocaust: then the losers ran for their lives. A great sheet of flame swept over the huge block, and licked up with its fiery tongues half a million dollars' worth of costly printing-material and objects of religious art."

"The Providence Journal," while speaking editorially of the fire, uses this truthful language: —

"Boston always was and always will be a puzzle. Macullar, Williams, and Parker, burned out, were and

are a very heavy clothing-concern, employing a large number of sewing-women. These women declined to accept their wages for their last week's work, thinking that the aggregate sum might be acceptable to the firm, considering their heavy losses. The firm turned round to Miss Jennie Collins, and told her to send to them any work-girls, whether heretofore employed by them or not, who might be in need, and they would provide for them; and they further advertised that their pay-roll would be made up on Monday as usual, and requested their employés to come and take their pay. Truly the old Massachusetts grit has not yet run out, despite the statistics. Meanwhile, admiring the self-sustaining spirit and power of the Bostonians, we hold ourselves, as does the country, ready to do what we can for them when they will allow us to do any thing. Our respect for their pluck will not chill our hearts, or restrain our hands."

A newspaper published two days after the fire speaks of the business-men as they appeared at that time: —

"Everywhere one meets with evidences of the energy and courage of our business-men under circumstances which would justify even Mark Tapley in having a fit of the blues. Few are desponding; and nearly every one takes a cheerful view of the matter. Said one merchant, 'We've had a little fire here, and the whole business-quarter is destroyed: but we are going to build

it right up again, and better than before, and in a year or two; and then you'll see what a splendid city Boston is.'"

"On Monday morning after the fire, the agents for the Ætna Insurance Company of Hartford placed a large placard in their window, announcing that that company was all right; and it was worth while to see the pleased policy-holders as they would pass by, and knock on the glass to the agent, who sat inside, and point exultingly to the cheerful announcement, while he would respond with a pleased and confirmatory nod. That spot was the scene of many such pantomimes of delight during the day; and many hearts were made happy."

When the powder arrived from the Navy Yard, on Saturday night, the officer in charge, true to his military training, touched his hat to Postmaster Burt, and said, "Can you tell me, sir, who is to sign the receipt for this powder?"

Boston subscribed over three hundred thousand dollars towards the relief of the sufferers by the fire.

Among the gratifying examples of self-sacrificing devotion during the night of the fire, it is pleasant to mention the noble conduct of J. H. Pote and Co., the team-

sters of the Eastern Railroad, who set at work thirty horses, with carts or wagons, to save goods from the various stores and warehouses, and kept them engaged from two, A.M., on Sunday, until six, P.M., entirely free of charge. In view of the fact that services of this character are generally paid for at an enormous rate, the action of Mr. Pote was a most generous one.

The charges made by some teamsters for drayage, on the night of the fire, were, in some instances, ludicrously large. One man asked a hundred dollars for carrying a painted chamber-set to the Common. Another, after getting a load of dry-goods, refused to move unless given seventy-five dollars in advance for taking the load two blocks. The proprietors left him; and, when the fire drove him away, he took the goods home, was arrested the next morning for theft, and paid seventy-five dollars to be let off.

A young lady was found, one day after the fire, searching among the heaps of hot brick and stone of a former stately structure on Devonshire Street, in the vain hope of discovering a mass of gold which on Saturday represented the coinage of a thousand dollars. She was to have it *if she found it.*

All of South Boston east of H Street, and particularly between I and L Streets, was directly in the path

of the sparks and brands. Flakes of granite from some of the magnificent buildings destroyed, fragments of slate, and even whole sheets of roofing-tin, were borne across the harbor by the strong currents of heated air and smoke, and fell thickly upon the housetops and pavements. There were many narrow escapes from damage by fire in the vicinity of City Point, — more than a mile from the fire. One building near the gas-house on K Street, which was occupied by several families as a dwelling-house, was fired, but fortunately discovered in time to be extinguished. Two or three firebrands a foot or more in length fell upon the roof of a house on Broadway, three or four doors beyond K Street; and one on the roof nearest K, where it burned for several minutes. Both these roofs being slated, no damage was done; though, in the former case, there was a narrow escape from the ignition of the woodwork of several dormer-windows. In both cases, and among nearly all the residents in this vicinity, the owners and occupants of dwellings sat through the night, wrapped in rugs or blankets, upon their roofs, with pails of water at hand; or patrolled the streets and yards, watching the falling missiles, and promptly extinguishing them as soon as possible.

While the fire was raging in the store of Weeks and Potter, Sunday morning, two men, whose names are not known, but who were thought to be connected with the

establishment, were struck down, in their efforts to save stock, by the fall of a portion of the side-wall. One was totally buried; but the other was caught only by the legs. He shouted for succor, saying, that, if his legs were extricated, he could get out easily. Several firemen responded by dashing into the doomed building, the front-wall of which was even then tottering, and making frantic efforts to release the poor fellow. Suddenly they were startled by a cry that the massive front-wall was going over. There was a desperate rush for life; and a silent horror seized the spectators as the wall fell with a thundering crash, and it was seen that two of the firemen had shared the fate of those whom they had so nobly tried to save.

As the fire went down, the merchants began to put up signs on their lots, telling where they could be found. Among them were a number which were somewhat laughable. One firm stated very curtly, "We have removed from this place;" another said, "Closed during the heated term;" another, "Gone up; can be seen at No. —;" still another, "Gone to Tophet to get cooled off;" and still another, "These damaged goods to be sold low, and the building thrown in." In one place there was a dry-goods box, with an eel in it that had been found in the hose-pipe, labelled "Fish-market: stock low in such —— hot weather." At one corner was the following sign: "Dash, Blank, and Co. have not removed.

They will resume business at the old stand on Tuesday morning. Employés need not stop to open store, but begin cleaning bricks immediately." One firm quoted 2 Cor., chap. iv., ver. 8, 9.

One of the spiciest daily newspapers ("The Globe") told the following amusing incidents: "Not the least laughable of the incidents to which we allude was that in which a middle-aged lady played important parts. She was somewhat on the shady side of forty, tall, thin, and bony of aspect. Her sandy hair was screwed up into numberless rigid curls on either side of her face; and a crunched bonnet fluttered defiantly down her back, and was only prevented from falling off by the ribbons by which it was tied about her neck. Her rusty black dress had been evidently hurried on at a moment's warning, as it was buttoned and hooked in a style of labyrinthine perplexity. She pushed her way through the excited crowds while the fire was raging at its highest, wringing her hands, and shrieking frantically for 'Clara,' and implored, wept, stormed, and moaned for 'Clara,' enlisting everybody's sympathy. 'Will nobody put out a hand to save the poor thing?' she implored in almost frantic accents. 'Oh, dear! oh, dear! my little darling will be burnt to death!' Even the most hardened felt for the agony that seemed to be urging the poor woman to madness. Firemen stopped their work to ask her where her 'Clara' was; and several crowded about her with proffers of assistance if

she would only be explicit. But not a coherent explanation could be gained from her. She continued to wring her hands, and to moan, 'Clara, Clara! my poor Clara!' In the mean while a thrill of terror went through the multitude at the idea that some human creature was in deadly peril of burning to death, and no intelligence of her whereabouts was to be gained from the half-demented woman before them, who rocked to and fro, sobbing, and refusing to be comforted. Presently, with a wild shriek of joy she darted forward, shouting 'Clara, Clara!' and stooped down. Crouching in a corner was a large white cat, with singed fur, who, with curved back and swollen tail, stood hissing and spitting with fearful energy. As the old lady stooped to pick her darling up, the ungrateful cat flew at her, leaving the marks of her claws on her face, and darted off in mad terror amid the jeers, laughter, and hootings of the crowd; her frantic mistress darting after her, with the bonnet flying ensign downward like a signal of distress.

"Another amusing diversion was created by a tall, well-knit, and rather rugged specimen of humanity, who stood gazing at the fire with the deepest interest. Every now and then he would take a vigorous bite at a large hunk of tobacco, and chew with an energy that knew no flagging, but without taking his eyes from the fire, which appeared to fascinate him. As the flames made headway, he moved uneasily, shifted his weight from one foot to the other, and chewed with renewed animation.

Each new building that fell a prey to the fire seemed to cause him to experience the most poignant despair. His glance was not so strongly marked by sympathy as by anxiety. His sallow jaws seemed to elongate with every fresh building that went down. His dress and appearance did not betoken a man who had any enormous amount of property at stake there ; and the general impression among those who observed him was, that his alarm was caused by a prospect of losing his situation. Presently, when the flames seemed as though they would ingulf the whole city, he turned his pale face from the flames, and, addressing a party by his side, exclaimed with no less pride than disgust, 'Psho! it can't be done! the place ain't big enough! The Chicago fire knocked this all to splinters. Yes, it did, I tell you. I was born there, and I ought to know. I tell you, sir, Chicago is bound to be ahead on this fire yet.' And he walked away, his face glowing with patriotic fervor, and an expression of the most unbounded contempt overspreading his countenance for the miserable failure that was certain to attend all envious attempts of Boston to rival Chicago in the matter of fires.

"The number of tipsy men who were to be seen in the neighborhood of the fire baffles computation. They sprang up without warning in all directions, tumbling into the mud, stepping into man-holes, tripping over obstructions of every description, and picking themselves up again with that sodden indifference to pain

and inconvenience that is so characteristic of the enthusiastic devotee at the shrine of Bacchus. One of these had a large bundle wrapped in a white sheet, which he was dragging after him through the mud and mire, and which had the effect of steadying him to some extent, and prevented him from falling. How many people he swept off their feet as he pulled his load after him will never now be known. His progress was suddenly brought to a stand-still by a policeman, who seized him, and began to question him regarding the right by which he kept company with the bundle; but the only reply elicited was a stupid stare from a pair of lack-lustre eyes, a hiccough, and the exclamation, 'Aive-ri, missur! Big fire down 'ere. Wha'll yer take?' No shaking, hustling, or remonstrance, could win any other answer from him. At length the policeman began to drag him away, bundle and all; when the tipsy idiot loosened his hold on the bundle, and said, 'Look a-here, missur policeman: if yer goin' to take me up, yer mayz-well carry mer bunnel too. I'm willing. Mine's whiskey: wass yourn?'

"During the fire, amusing examples of prudence were visible in every direction. A number of men, being caught, it is presumed, in their Sunday-go-to-meeting-ers, were so careful as to turn their coats inside out, thus saving the cloth. Where these garments were lined in bright or different colored goods, the effect was peculiar. One man was to be seen with red body-lin-

ing and bright yellow sleeves; and of course this made a notable, if not tasty-looking figure. One of the many street-Arabs that were thronging at every corner sang out to a chum, 'Look out, there, Jake! here comes one of them penitentiary birds. I suppose he's running for Congress.'

"A laughable instance of how dazed a man can become was seen in the case of a gentleman whose apartments, probably, had to be vacated in haste, and who had attempted to snatch up and carry off the most valuable of his personal effects. In this case it was a chapeau such as usually forms part of a Knight Templar's uniform.

"One woman, frantic with terror, was seen rushing down Devonshire Street with a cheap but large looking-glass in her arms, which was cracked in all directions, with great gaps where pieces of glass had fallen out. Her face was as full of stony terror as if she had gazed upon the head of Medusa. Every now and then she looked backward over her shoulder: and the sight that met her view seemed to fill her with an additional fear; for she flew along, rather than ran. Suddenly she tripped, and fell squarely on the pavement, with the looking-glass under her. It was crushed into splinters; but she, unheeding, regained her feet, and, seizing the fragments of the frame, hugged them to her heart, and sped on her frantic course like an arrow shot from a bow.

"Many funny scenes occurred at the barriers where the soldiers were stationed to keep off the crowd. At one of these, a man with a good-humored expression of countenance, but evidently a working-man, attempted to pass; when the sentinel challenged him rather roughly, and refused him admission. He gazed at the soldier, who was a mere boy, and exclaimed, 'Say, sonny: who did you do whitewashing for before your mother bought you that sojer-coat?' At another barrier a rather well-dressed gentleman attempted to pass, and the sentinel demurred. The former entreated; but the soldier was inexorable in his sense of duty. 'No, sir,' he exclaimed: 'you could not pass here without an order, even if you were President of the United States.' The gentleman gazed at him for a moment with mock admiration, and replied, 'Come to my arms! I would rather lose twenty cherry-trees than have one of Napoleon's Old Guard tell a lie.' Another person, when he presented himself, was saluted with the stereotyped exclamation, 'You cannot pass.' He drew a piece of paper out of his pocket, and, showing it to the sentinel, retorted, 'I guess I'll not only pass, but go it alone;' and, as he went inside the lines on the strength of an order from the chief of police, he winked at the sentinel, and said, 'Euchred, pard!'"

CHAPTER XXI.

THE EFFECT.

HAD Hugh Miller, in his polished essay upon Dr. Chalmers, been writing of the great fire in Boston, and its effect upon the world, he could not have employed language more apt: "Has the reader ever heard a piece of heavy ordnance fired amid the mountains of our country? First, there is the ear-stunning report of the piece itself, the prime mover of those airy undulations that travel outwards, circle beyond circle, toward the far horizon; then some hoary precipice, that rises tall and solemn in the immediate neighborhood, takes up the sound, and it comes rolling back from its rough front in thunder, like a giant-wave flung far seaward from the rock against which it has broken; then some more-distant hill becomes vocal; and then another, and another, and anon another; and then there is a slight pause, as if all were over. The undulations are travelling unbroken along from flat moor, or across some expansive

lake, or over some deep valley, filled, happily, by some long withdrawing arm of the sea. And then the more remote mountains lift up their voices in mysterious mutterings, — now lower, now louder, now more abrupt, anon more prolonged; each, as it recedes, taking up the tale in closer succession to the one that had previously spoken, till at length their distinct utterings are lost in one low, continuous sound, that at last dies out amid the shattered peaks of the desert wilderness; and unbroken stillness settles over the scene, as at first."

Through a scarce voluntary exercise of that faculty of analogy and comparison so natural to the human mind, that it converts all the existences of the physical into forms and expressions of the world moral and intellectual, we have oftener than once thought of the phenomenon and its attendant results, as strikingly representative of effects produced by "the great fire in Boston." It is an event which has, we find, rendered vocal the echoes of the world; and they are still returning upon us, after measured intervals, according to the distances.

Our first wild cry of anguish comes back to us from all parts of the world, more and more subdued with each sonant wavelet, until to-day we hear it only in the whispers of peace, and the hushed prayers of the distant millions asking that Boston may not suffer.

Our losses, like our cries, go out from us to others in wave-like circles or atmospheric undulations; and the

effect moves on and on, growing weaker and fainter, but nevertheless moving still onward forever.

The loss was enormous; but we met it not alone. The network of human civilization is so interwoven, that the breaking of a single thread weakens the whole web. Not alone in moral influences, art, culture, and intellectual guidance, does the world suffer with Boston; but the destruction of her warehouses makes lighter the freights of railways, the cargoes of fleets, the profits of agriculture, and the gains by foreign trade. Through non-resident stockholders, distant creditors, the insurance-companies of other cities, and the greater or the lesser demand for goods, the contagion has spread, until men thousands of miles away are poor to-day because there was a fire in Boston.

It has something more or less to do with national finances; it influences the millionnaires of Wall Street; it glides into every manufactory, and nerves or unnerves the arm of labor, according as the fire increased or decreased the demand for certain fabrics. It visits the homes of millions; and something is missed from the luxuries or comforts of life which would have been there but for the Boston fire. A stick of wood, a basket of coal, a part of a meal, or the last piece of bread, are gone; and, though the loser may not know the reason why he is deprived of such things, eternity will tell him of the Boston fire.

Working-women and working-men out of employment

crowd into other pursuits or other cities, displacing many, exchanging with some, and setting in motion a train of circumstances which gives wives to the young men of the West, orators to rostrums built of primitive forest-trees, ministers of the gospel to the heathen, work for many, poverty for some, and wealth for a few. Everywhere that the habitations of men can be found will there be seen and felt some effect of that terrible overturning and destruction.

In Boston itself there is much less ruin and sorrow than the reader would suppose. The losses came upon the wealthiest men of the city, many of whom could loose as much more, and still live in opulence. Some fell under the crushing blow, but, with a courage and hope which inspires and astonishes the beholder by its sublimity, are attempting, with only debts for capital, to live, to accumulate, and to pay. The sad faces which one would naturally expect to find on the streets of Boston are not there. Christmas and New-Year's have less of luxuriant gifts; but the same sweet, cheerful countenances are there, and the world is in many cases the brighter for it.

Ah, our much-loved Boston! we are all proud of thee to-day. Thou hast a glory now which crowns only the courageous, the virtuous, and the faithful. We have seen in thy ash-heaps and shattered façades more beauty than wealth can purchase. We have seen wrecks of buildings, but no wrecks of men. We have

seen ruined storehouses, but no ruined intellects. We have witnessed the overthrow of thy temples; but no broken characters were there.

Yea, there are huge and ghastly battlements, majestic in ruin, staring at us in Boston; and one would almost think himself walking the porches of the Temple of Isis in Pompeii, the mud-walled streets of Jerusalem, or the dismal baths of Caracalla, did he not see about him the living senators instead of lazzaroni, the prophets instead of the Arabs, and the Antonys and Cæsars instead of the beggarly Roman rabble. Unstable, indeed, are thy marts of trade; but the pillars of Hercules were sooner shaken than the courage and integrity of the hearts which frequented thy commercial halls.

Man must be stone, if the generous sacrifices, the cheerful new beginnings, the strict honesty, the boundless charity, and the abiding faith in God, did not awaken pulse-quickening emotions. London built a monument in memory of her great fire, and often has she been ridiculed for it; but so much of heroic daring, so much of patient suffering, so much of love, and so much of patriotism, as one finds among the ruins of Boston, as he searches for a record, is as deserving of granite towers and memorial monuments as are the feats of Wellington at Waterloo, or Warren at Bunker Hill. He is, in truth, as much a hero who is *ready* to dare and to die as he to whom God has given that opportunity. Heroes there are about whom the world knows nothing;

and the business-men and the working-men of Boston were of that number until the fire revealed them, as it brings forth the precious metals from the unattractive ore.

It would take years to see as it should be seen, or to tell as it should be told, the story of the fire, with its interesting ramifications; and the writer *must* be content with such facts as have requited his careful search.

Oh that we had the space and time to tell of the thousand instances where creditors cheerfully receipted their bills, or made large discounts to losers, without hesitation; where clerks offered to work for their old employers for insignificant wages, in order to help those ruined men into business again; and where rich and poor offered money and assistance to the unfortunate without compensation or security! But those tales must be left to volumes much larger than this.

We may have written hastily, may have erred in judgment, and have, perhaps, neglected much that should have been written; yet we close this volume with a sense of satisfaction, because we have already been rewarded with more faith in humanity, more respect for our nation, more regard for sister-communities, and, lastly, more love for brave, generous, kind-hearted Boston.

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and grace of flannel; yet loses
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